









## BOYS OF THE BORDER

*By Mary P. Wells Smith.*

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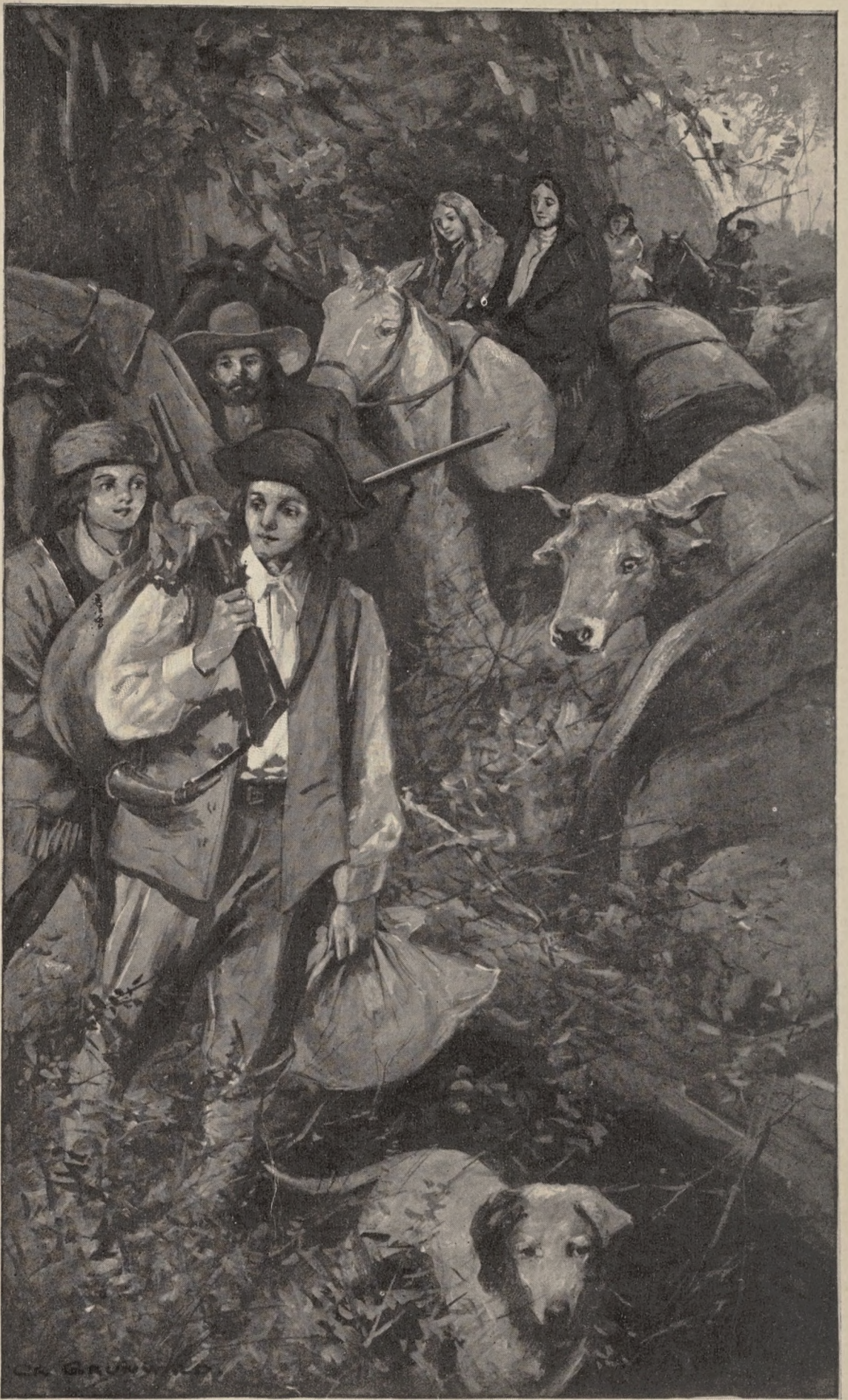
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“Through primeval forest, as yet untouched by the hand of man.”

FRONTISPIECE. See page 46.

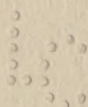
# BOYS OF THE BORDER

BY

MARY P. WELLS SMITH

AUTHOR OF "THE YOUNG PURITANS SERIES," "THE JOLLY GOOD TIMES SERIES,"  
"THE OLD DEERFIELD SERIES," "MISS ELLIS'S MISSION," ETC.

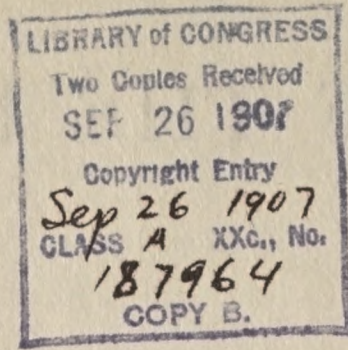
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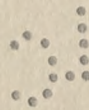


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THE UNIVERSITY PRESS, CAMBRIDGE, MASS., U. S. A.

TO  
HON. JOHN A. AIKEN,  
CHIEF JUSTICE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT  
OF MASSACHUSETTS.

Judge Aiken's deep interest in everything relating to the early history of our locality, especially matters pertaining to the border forts, is well known to his friends. The author is much indebted to him for the loan of Perry's "Origins in Williamstown," and many other valuable historic works bearing on the period of this story, and also for friendly counsel and suggestions.



## PREFACE.

THIS book, the third volume of "The Old Deerfield Series," narrates events in the Deerfield Valley during the French and Indian wars, from 1746 to 1755, especially those connected with the line of forts along the northwest border of Massachusetts, and north, up the Connecticut. The series of historical stories by the author, beginning with "The Young Puritans Series," and continued in "The Old Deerfield Series," is intended practically to cover the history of Western Massachusetts from the time of King Philip's War down to the Revolutionary period, to which point the present volume brings the history.

This is the first attempt, in the author's knowledge, to tell the tale of the border forts in story form. While no very startling events are depicted, yet the narrative can but be stirring, showing as it does the high faith, unflinching courage and determination of the plain,

everyday people who were the first settlers, and the hardships they endured in the early settlement of this region. Hon. George Sheldon, President of the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association, in his address at the dedication of Captain Rice's monument, very truly said of the men of the time:

"They were trained in Indian warfare — hardy and bold, wise in woodcraft, inured to the hardships of marching and scouting in the forests, and prompt to the rescue on every alarm."

The descendants of the men and women whose early struggles are here narrated are scattered all over our country, its very salt and savor; wherever found, it is safe to say, retaining some worthy flavor of the good old stock.

M. P. W. S.

GREENFIELD, MASS.,

June 6, 1907.

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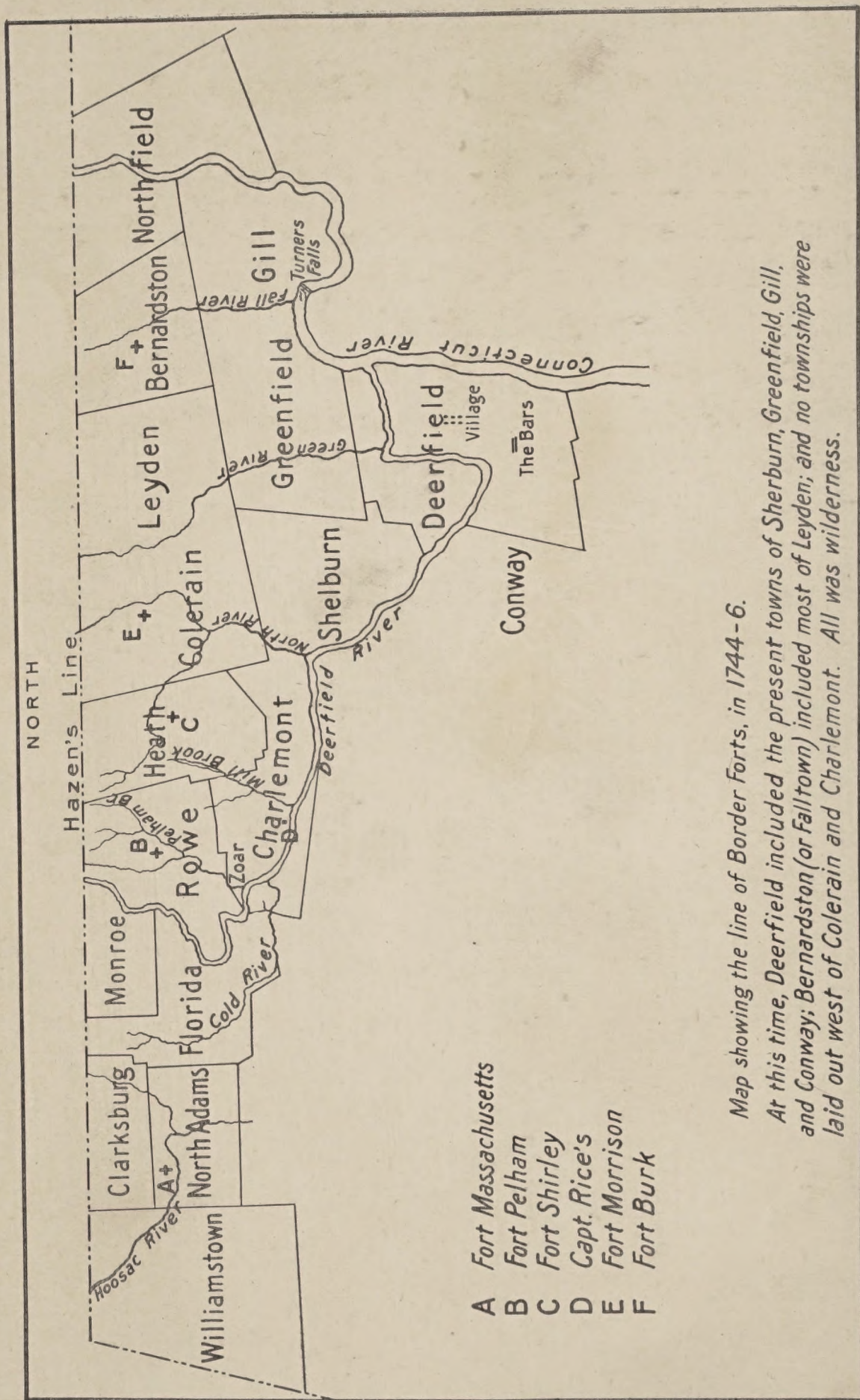
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Map showing the line of Border Forts, in 1744-6.

At this time, Deerfield included the present towns of Sherburn, Greenfield, Gill, and Conway; Bernardston (or Falltown) included most of Leyden; and no townships were laid out west of Colerain and Charlemont. All was wilderness.

# BOYS OF THE BORDER.

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## CHAPTER I.

### A BAND OF PIONEERS.

**I**T was spring in Deerfield, a lovely spring day late in April, 1743. The snow had vanished, save a few patches still lying in shaded gorges on Mount Pocumtuck or on the long range of hills to the westward. The grass on the meadows was fast growing green, and the buds on the trees, swelling in the warm sunshine, were coquetting with impatient mankind, coyly delaying their much expected opening from day to day.

Deerfield farmers had been improving the fine weather, carting out on the meadows, beginning to plough in certain favored localities, everywhere preparing for the spring planting. The air was fragrant with the smell of new grass and fresh earth, the song birds were returning, and all the world was glad with the

hopeful sense of new life and opportunity that comes with the spring.

Young Jonathan Hoyt, after his hard day's work on the meadows with his father, was minded to have a little sport before nightfall. Bat and ball in hand, he hurried southward, entering the old stockade, whose gates, in these times of peace, decayed and ruined (as were the walls), hung wide open. This Friday afternoon the sun was already sinking low over the western hills.

Passing Thomas Wells's house, he saw Eleazer and Ebenezer Wells out by the corn-house, busily at work.

"What are you doing, boys?" called Jonathan.

"Dressing a woodchuck skin," answered Eleazer. "Ebenezer's had good luck; caught a nice, fat woodchuck, and we're going to dry the skin for whiplashes."

"Can't you come down to the Arms boys' for a game of ball? Elijah says there's a nice dry spot in the street, near his house, and asked me to come down to-night. There's plenty of time for a game before supper."

The Wells boys hurriedly finished nailing their woodchuck skin to the corn-house door, and joined Jonathan, Eleazer saying:

"It will seem good to play ball again. We have not had a game since Thanksgiving Day."

"No," said Jonathan, "winter set in so early. Deep snow fell right after Thanksgiving, and we've only just seen the last of it."

Agrippa Wells, a little fellow of five, ran after his big brothers, crying:

"Wait! Wait for me, Eleazer! I want to go too."

But here his mother came to the door, saying:

"No, no, Agrippa. The boys don't want you. Come in now and get your bread and milk. 'Tis near trundle-bed time for small folk;" and Agrippa had to go reluctantly indoors.

As the boys walked on, they met young Dr. Thomas Williams riding in from the south, his horse, his saddlebags, the long leggings that protected his trousers, all bespattered with mud.

"I wonder who's sick," said Eleazer, as the doctor trotted briskly on to the north.

"Some of the Allens down at the Bars," said Jonathan. "Dr. Williams told my father he had to ride down to the Bars this afternoon, mud or no mud. He said something about Samuel Allen, but whether it is father or son that's ill, father did not understand."

The boys were now opposite John Nims's house, and Daniel, youngest son of John, a boy of thirteen, who happened to be setting forth for the store of Capt. Elijah Williams across the training field, was not slow to perceive that the older boys had some fun on hand.

"Halloo, boys," he cried. "Where are you going?"

"Never you mind," said Jonathan, not inclined to be bothered with what he would probably have dubbed "trundle-bed trash."

"Oh, you can't fool me!" said young Dan. "You're going down to the Armses' to play ball, that's where you're going. I'll be down in a minute."

Away ran Daniel across the training field to the store on the corner of the lane leading down to the ford, rushing through his errand as rapidly as the dignity of Captain Williams permitted, and then off he tagged after the big boys, caring little whether they wanted him or not.

When the boys reached Samuel Wells's house, young David Wells was just driving an ox cart into the yard. To the boys' invitation to join them, he replied:

"All right. I'll be down as quick as I get these oxen unyoked."

Passing Eleazer Hawks's, Seth Hawks was also pressed into service, a willing recruit.

"We've enough now, with the Arms boys," said Jonathan.

William Arms lived at the south end of Deerfield street, around the corner to the west, his house facing south, a fair and sunny spot for a dwelling, with a sightly outlook over the broad meadows and up to the mountains each side. His boys were such a troop they were generally spoken of collectively as "the Arms boys." They were now out on the dry patch at the south end, knocking and tossing a ball about among themselves.

"Now, Phineas," said Elijah, the oldest, as he saw his friends Jonathan and the rest approaching, "you and the twins will have to get out. We big boys want this place for our game."

"I don't want to go away," said Phineas. "This is the best place. We want to play as much as you do."

"I can't help that. You'll have to go," said Elijah, with all the authority of an older brother.

"Why don't you have a game of your own, down in front of our house?" asked Thomas Arms. "It's plenty dry enough there. Look, there come Daniel Nims and Abner Hawks

now, tagging along after the big boys. They'll help you out."

Abner Hawks was a boy of eleven, son of Sergeant John Hawks. Living next door to his cousin Seth, he had readily accepted Daniel's invitation to join in the fun.

The sight of Dan Nims and Abner Hawks reconciled Phineas and the Arms twins, David and Jonathan, to their exclusion from the game of the elder boys. As Abner had a fine ball of his own, Daniel and Phineas were the more willing to overlook the fact that he was younger than they.

"Did you bring your ball, Abner?" cried Phineas. "That's good. Come on over by my house, and we will have a game of our own."

The "south end" soon presented an animated scene, with boys tossing and batting balls, vaulting fences, leaping the brook, scampering here, there, and everywhere in pursuit of their balls, with loud shouts and laughter.

In the midst of the fun, another boy on horseback was seen briskly trotting along the meadow road from the south.

"There comes Oliver Amsden," said Phineas. "Let's get him to play with us. Oliver," he cried, as the horse drew near, "get off and help us out. We need one more boy. You can't

get in with Jonathan and Elijah. Come on, Oliver."

"I'd like nothing better," said Oliver, looking rather wistfully at the sport, for he lived down at the Bars, two miles below the village. The wide meadows surrounding Deerfield were fenced in, with gates or bars where the road passed through. In the fall, after the crops were gathered, the cattle, allowed to run at large during the summer in the woods on Mount Pocumtuck, were driven into this enclosure, to pasture until the coming of snow obliged their owners to put them up in barns for the winter. Woe to the careless boy who should chance to leave gate open or bars down! The fine imposed would certainly cost him some of the precious hoard of shillings he had saved from sale of fox or rabbit fur.

Only two families were settled at the Bars, a little below the southern entrance to the meadow, those of Samuel Allen and John Amsden. It was an isolated situation. There were no boys of Oliver's age in the two families, and he would greatly have enjoyed a good game of ball with the others, but he said:

"No, I can't stop. Little Sam Allen's pretty sick. Dr. Williams fears it is the throat distemper, and he asked me to ride up to his house

for a particular kind of liniment that he did not happen to have in his saddlebags."

"That's too bad," said Phineas.

"I'd love to stop and play awhile," said Oliver, "but I must hurry back with the liniment."

Being a human boy, he could not resist reining in his horse and stopping a minute, after he had rounded the corner, to watch the older boys' game. Seth Hawks was making a fine run with the ball, encouraged by loud shouts of "Go it, Seth! That's it. Good, good!" as Seth reached the goal in triumph ahead of Ebenezer Wells, his opponent.

The sun was now disappearing behind the mountain, and Eleazer said:

"This game will have to be the last."

At that moment Abner Hawks cried:

"Jonathan! Eleazer! Look, look! See what's coming!"

The boys, looking where Abner pointed, saw coming far down the meadow road a company of horseback riders, driving before them a small herd of cattle. The horses seemed heavily laden, and walked slowly, as if weary.

"I wonder who such a troop of travellers as that can be, and where they come from," said Ebenezer.

"Perhaps they come from the Bay!" said Eleazer.

A tired dog, head and tail down, jogged soberly along beside the tall, fine-looking man who seemed the leader of the party.

"I must run for home," said Jonathan Hoyt, "and try to get a bite to eat before these travellers arrive. I shall have to help put up those horses, and I'm hungry as a bear after our game of ball."

And away he ran, for Lieut. Jonathan Hoyt, Jonathan's father, kept tavern, assisted by his oldest son, David.

The older boys now hastened home, but the younger set still tarried, full of an irresistible curiosity to see who these travellers might be. The coming of strangers from the outside world, especially if from the Bay (as Boston locality was called), was always an event of interest to the people of this remote frontier settlement. Often the travellers brought letters or tidings from distant friends, or the latest news from "home," as England was still called, or perhaps a few copies of the *Boston News Letter*, welcome even if weeks old. Deerfield's only link with the outside world was furnished by horseback riders.

The Hoyts were thrown into some excite-

ment when Jonathan came in, announcing a troop of travellers on the way. As the riders drew near enough to permit faces to be distinguished through the fast gathering dusk, Lieutenant Hoyt exclaimed:

"I declare, it is Capt. Moses Rice and family! He told me last fall, when he passed through on his way to Rutland, that he intended, God willing, to bring his family up this spring, and actually settle on the lands he has purchased to the westward, out in the Hoosac Mountains, and here they are!"

"Well, well, we must fly around, and get a nice hot supper ready, for they will be tired and hungry after such a jaunt," said Mrs. Hoyt. "Come, Nabby," she called to her daughter, "don't stand idling. There is plenty for us both to do. I'm glad I put on a big pot of beans this morning."

Cæsar, the Hoyts' negro slave, was also pressed into active service.

As the leader of the band, a tall, strong, resolute looking man, rode up to the door, Lieutenant Hoyt gave him hearty greeting.

"So here you are, Captain, with all your family. Welcome to Deerfield, Mrs. Rice. You must be tired after such a journey."

"We are indeed," said Mrs. Rice, as Hoyt

led her horse to the horse-block and aided her to dismount. "We were all most thankful when we rode in at the Bars below, and saw the smoke of Deerfield houses rising in the distance. Poor little Artemas nearly fell off old Dolly's back, he was so tired and sleepy."

Artemas, a boy of nine, rode a steady old mare, sitting astride a load of bedclothes and other effects strapped to her back, and tired enough did he look. But he said stoutly:

"I'm more hungry than sleepy. I could eat raw venison, I am so starved."

"Well, come right in, and the women will soon have supper on. My sons will care for your horses."

The Rices dismounted. Besides the captain, Mrs. Rice, and Artemas, there were two sons, Aaron, a youth of eighteen, and Sylvanus, a boy of fourteen, and two girls, Dinah, a tall, fair maiden of sixteen, and Tamar, a girl of eleven; a fine looking, bright, healthy group of young people. The captain's oldest son, Samuel, had remained behind for the present in Rutland, expecting to join his father later.

The tired horses pricked up their ears in eager animation, when they were unloaded and taken into the barn, where they well knew that

rest and plenty of sweet hay and oats awaited them, after their long toil over rough roads, at the best but little more than paths. The Rices had come from Rutland in the eastern part of the colony, by the Bay Path to Hadley, stopping over night at Brookfield, and again at Hadley.

The weary travellers, lame and sore from their long ride, welcomed the summons to supper. The baked pork and beans, Mrs. Hoyt's hot brown bread and sweet butter, the mugs of hot flip that Lieutenant Hoyt skillfully prepared, all were appreciated.

Hardly had Artemas finished eating, when he belied his own words by falling fast asleep in his chair, his head sunk on his breast.

"See that poor boy," said his mother tenderly. "We must contrive somehow to get him upstairs to bed."

"Do you continue your journey to-morrow?" asked Mrs. Hoyt.

"No. We planned to rest here over the Sabbath, if you can accommodate such a troop of us so long, and proceed on Monday," said Mrs. Rice.

"Deerfield will furnish our only opportunity for religious privileges hereafter," said Captain Rice. "My wife is tired from the breaking up

at Rutland, the packing, and the trip. We both felt it would help us to hear one of Parson Ashley's good sermons, worship with you all, and rest quietly here over the Sabbath, before we turn our faces toward the wilderness. We shall go on our way with fresh heart Monday morning."

"We will gladly keep you," said Mrs. Hoyt, "only I cannot furnish beds for all. I must ask your older sons if they are willing to sleep out, at a neighbor's. Your father can accommodate them, can he not, Freedom?" she asked a young girl who had run in, ostensibly to "help" the Hoyts, but really out of curiosity to see who the newcomers might be. Her father, Thomas French, the village blacksmith, like others of the neighbors, often helped the Hoyts by taking travellers to lodge, when the little hostelry was overcrowded.

"Oh, yes," said Freedom, blushing as all eyes were thus directed to her. "I know he will. I will run home now and tell mother some one is coming."

"I will go along with you," said Aaron, "for I am nearly as far gone with sleep as Artemas."

And so Aaron Rice and Sylvanus, escorted by Freedom French, went out, and the rest of the Rice family were not long in seeking their

welcome beds. Delicious was the sense of repose after the long day's jolting as they sank into the soft beds of pigeon feathers, and forgot all weariness, all anxieties, in sweet, refreshing sleep.

## CHAPTER II.

### A SUNDAY'S REST.

SATURDAY Captain Rice was busy, looking after goods and chattels that he and his sons had brought up the previous year and stored in Deerfield. It would cost them more than one long trip to Deerfield and return before all these belongings could be transported to his new home among the western hills.

Mrs. Rice was only too glad to rest quietly during the day, while her children made the acquaintance of some of the Deerfield young people and rambled around to see the village, pleased with the novelty and change, like all young people, quite ready to forget the things that are behind in pressing on towards those that lie before.

Sunday was a typical April day; clouds drifting across the sky often sending down gentle showers; the sky blue, the sunlight warm and caressing, between the showers.

"Fine growing weather this," said Lieutenant Hoyt at the breakfast table.

"These showers will help green my meadows," said Captain Rice. "I have some fine fertile acres of open meadow land along the Deerfield in my new purchase, as good land as the sun ever shone on."

"I must say I have often wondered what could have tempted you to seek a home out there in Boston Township No. 1, up among the western mountains, so remote from any settlement," said Mrs. Hoyt. "I told the captain last year, Mrs. Rice, when he and his sons stopped over here, going to and from his new land, that, were I his wife, it would take strong arguments to persuade me to go up there to live. I hardly thought you would consent to going there at present, with your family of children."

"The captain thinks it is best," said Mrs. Rice, as if that settled the matter. But her anxious expression showed that her wifely acquiescence had cost her some struggle and many forebodings.

"Our two daughters, who married Capt. John Burk and Ebenezer Sheldon, went with their husbands three years ago to start a new settlement at Falltown, about ten miles to the north of us," said Mrs. Hoyt. "That seemed hazardous enough, and I have worried more than a

little about them. But their risk is as nothing compared to yours."

"A man with a family coming on," said Captain Rice, "must look ahead. The desirable lands around the older settlements are now largely taken up, especially in the eastern part of the province. By striking out into the wilderness farther to the west, I was able to secure at low price lands that, when improved, will enable me amply to provide for my children. We have had eighteen years of peace now, and I apprehend no danger from Indians, unless, by ill fortune, war should break out again between France and the mother country. These Spanish troubles look a little ominous. But I pray war may be averted."

"Since the great council with the Indians held here by Governor Belcher eight years ago," said Lieutenant Hoyt, "we have felt well assured of peace. True, the Indians who come in here trading sometimes, when they have had too much rum, make ugly threats of what they will do, in case of another war. But our government is trying to keep a hold on them, in various ways. The trading post at Fort Dummer, where our Joseph Kellogg (he was, like myself, one of the captives taken from Deerfield in 1704) acts as interpreter and

truck-master, has done much to cement the friendship between us and the Indians. The Indians are not slow to see that they get better goods and better terms there than in trafficking their furs with the Dutch at Albany."

"Were you an Indian captive, Lieutenant Hoyt?" asked Sylvanus.

"Yes, I know all about the Indians. I lived with them until I was almost in danger of becoming one myself."

"Jonathan can talk Indian still like a regular Mohawk," said Mrs. Hoyt. "His old master, Nannageskung, used to come down from Canada to visit us, now and then, as long as he lived."

"If all Indians were as decent as Nannageskung we need have little fear of them," said Lieutenant Hoyt. "Though, after all, an Indian is always an Indian still, at the bottom. I wouldn't have trusted even Nannageskung if he had heard the war whoop."

"Another war with the French and Indians would be the worst calamity that could befall us," said the captain. "Let us hope the home government will not bring it upon us."

Captain Rice had been an active and prominent citizen of Rutland, Mass., where he was captain of a cavalry company. In 1741 he had

bought twenty-two hundred acres of land in the valley of the upper Deerfield, at a township recently granted to Boston, called Boston Township No. 1.<sup>1</sup> During the summer of 1742 he and his sons had cleared some of the land, hewing strong timbers from the primeval giants of the forest laid low by their axes, and building from them a log house. Now the captain was on his way, with his family, to settle and live on his recent purchase.

When the notes of the church bell were heard solemnly echoing over the meadows and back from the mountains, all persons under the roof of Lieutenant Hoyt started for meeting, as indeed did every inhabitant of Deerfield, young or old, able, as the saying was, "to get from the bed to the fire."

"Your meeting-house is truly a goodly structure, especially for a frontier town that has suffered so sorely in the Indian wars," said Captain Rice, as they neared the church, which stood on the training field or common, on the west side of the street, facing Mount Pocumtuck and the sunrise.

<sup>1</sup> In 1735, three townships were granted to the town of Boston, to be laid out "in the unappropriated lands of the Province." These were known as "Boston Township No. 1" (Charlemont), "Boston Township No. 2" (Colerain), and "Boston Township No. 3," at Pontoosuc (Pittsfield).

"What a handsome weathercock and ball!" exclaimed Dinah, gazing up in admiration at the glittering rooster turning and twisting in the breeze on top a large gilt ball, surmounting the steeple, which rose from the centre of the high pitched roof.

"We think it rather creditable for a country town like ours," said Lieutenant Hoyt complacently. "I was commissioned to purchase it when the church was built, in 1729, and paid twenty good pounds for it in Boston."<sup>1</sup>

The meeting-house was nearly square, with three doors, one in front, one each on the north and south sides. As the Hoyts and Rices turned towards the north entrance they saw Parson Ashley, stately in wig, cocked hat, and bands, ascending the front steps, Madam Ashley on his arm, both bowing with dignified courtesy right and left to their parishioners as they entered the elaborately decorated front door.

The Rices looked around with much interest on the interior of the church, after they were seated on the benches that served for seats, the men one side the house, the women on the

<sup>1</sup> The old weathercock still surmounts the "Brick Church" steeple in Deerfield, as Sheldon says, "keeping watch and ward over the shifting wind, having seen the generations of men come and go for more than one hundred and sixty years."

other. Nabby Hoyt led Dinah and Tamar upstairs into the women's gallery, while Jonathan escorted the Rice boys into the gallery on the men's side, where sat a vigilant tithingman armed with a long rod. He looked so stern and important, and eyed Sylvanus and Artemas so keenly, as strange boys, that Artemas blushed and felt guilty, as if already detected playing in meeting. In a back corner of the gallery sat the negro slaves belonging to various Deerfield families. Here sat Mrs. Ashley's Jin and Cæsar, Lieutenant Hoyt's Cæsar, the Wellses' Luce and 'Bijah, Madam Hinsdale's Chloe and Noble, Mescheek, Pompey, the Sheldons' Coffee and Sue, and several other negroes.

The Rices were especially interested in the meeting-house, for henceforth this was to be their church. And they watched the people too as they entered with lively interest, for these were to be their future neighbors, as far as dwellers in the wilderness could be said to have neighbors. There were only a few pews in the meeting-house, built against the wall, under the galleries. Parson Ashley walked up the aisle to the west end, seated his wife in one of these pews, assigned to her and other dignitaries, and then ascended the steps to the high pulpit.

"There's no pulpit in Boston grander than that, I know," whispered Tamar to Dinah.

"'Sh," said Dinah. "The tithingman will point at you, or perhaps rap, if he see you whispering in meeting."

No wonder Tamar admired the pulpit. It was brave with panel work, painted a dark olive green, the whole interior lined with green baize, a handsome cushion of the same supporting Bible and hymnbook, and an imposing sounding board, also painted olive green, overhanging the whole. Behind the pulpit was a large window draped with green baize curtains caught back in heavy folds.

Under the pulpit, in the deacons' seat, facing the congregation, sat the two deacons, looking down on the people with a dignity second only to that of Parson Ashley. On the desk stood an hourglass, which Parson Ashley turned twice ere the service was over. He read long chapters from the Bible, made a long prayer, and gave out two hymns of many verses, sung with much spirit by choir and people. In the negro pew the dark faces shone with delight as the slaves poured out their souls in song, their rich voices mellowed by a plaintive, minor quality which seemed to express the sufferings of their race. Then all settled down for the sermon.

Parson Ashley preached a discourse of sixteen heads, wherein the sins of the people were vigorously denounced and driven home, and the probable wrath of God freely predicted. The people sat serenely under this, too well accustomed to such denunciations in the preaching of the time to be greatly affected.

Artemas, not yet fully rested after his long ride, fell fast asleep as Parson Ashley's voice went on and on. Soon he was wakened by a not over-gentle rap on the head from the long rod wielded by the vigilant tithingman.

"Who's hitting me?" muttered Artemas, half waking, doubling up his fists.

Sylvanus, blushing, hushed Artemas, now quite awake, and much frightened at having spoken out in meeting, while the other boys in the gallery, delighted at this little episode in the dry service, furtively nudged each other with twinkling eyes, yet careful not to smile, lest they too incur the tithingman's wrath.

The girls, it is to be feared, found a degree of relief during the sermon in studying the brave attire of some of the Deerfield dames, fine in brocade dresses expanded over hoops, with pointed bodices and elbow sleeves ending in ruffles, in gazing down on the scarlet or flowered hoods, the silk pelisses or pelerines, of which

their seats in the gallery gave them an excellent view.

During the short nooning a cold luncheon was served, and then all again returned to the meeting-house for a second service. Soon after this ended, Mrs. Hoyt served an early hot supper, of baked pork and beans and an Indian pudding, that had been put into the brick oven Saturday. Every one enjoyed the supper with hearty appetite and a sense of duty done, and every one was willing to see the sun set, except perhaps Mrs. Rice, whose constant underlying thought was, "To-morrow we begin our journey into the wilderness."

With sundown the rigor of Sunday was relaxed, and it was allowable to exchange visits, and talk on worldly topics. A number of the Deerfield people dropped in to call on the Rices. The men gathered in the barroom, the women in the large sitting-room, while the young people scattered about in different directions outdoors.

Phineas Arms and his twin brothers, with Abner and John Hawks, came to get Artemas to walk out with them.

"Where shall we go?" asked Abner, as the boys sauntered idly along in the sweet evening air.

"Let's go down past Mr. Ebenezer Wells's,"

said Phineas. "Maybe Luce 'Bijah will be out."

Mr. Wells owned a slave named Lucy, who, having married a negro named Abijah, was usually known as "Luce 'Bijah." She was quite a noted character in the little village, and, having a shrewd wit and quick tongue of her own, the boys especially delighted in talking with her.

The boys had the good luck to find Luce and 'Bijah out in the Wellses' side yard, where Luce, with her mistress's permission, was planning a little flower bed of her own.

"What are you doing, Luce?" called the boys.

"Oh, lackaday, nothing much. Jest something to make fools ask questions," answered Luce, with a cheerful display of her teeth, as the boys laughed at this retort. For she enjoyed the young folks as much as they did her.

Leaving the boys to sharpen their wits on Luce, we return to the Hoyts', where Captain Rice was particularly glad to welcome, among his callers, Sergeant John Hawks. He well knew Sergeant Hawks to be one of the most active among Deerfield's citizens, especially in military matters, one whom frequent scouting trips had made unusually familiar with all the region around.

"You show a brave spirit, Captain, in thus pushing out into the wilderness to settle," said Hawks, the first greetings over. "I know that section well where you are going, Boston Township No. 1, as 't is now called. I've often camped thereabouts when out on a scout. There's as good meadow land there as can be found anywhere, once it is broken up and cultivated."

"I can testify to that," spoke up Othniel Taylor, "for I too have been there more than once on scouts. My brother and I have bought a strip of land up there ourselves, Captain Rice, not far from yours, and think of moving up there soon to be your neighbors."

"Neighbors will be most welcome," said the captain, "especially to the women folks. The loneliness and trials of a new country are hardest on the women. They're not rugged like us, — take things to heart more. My wife will be overjoyed at this speedy prospect of neighbors."

"Did your wife object to leaving her old home in the east, and moving up into those wild hills?" asked Hawks.

"No. She felt it best for the children, and women will undergo a good deal where their children's welfare is concerned, you know."

Hawks nodded his head.

"But I know it is a sore trial to her, nevertheless. I hope you will be sure to stop and see us, if out that way scouting, Sergeant."

"You may rest assured of that," said Hawks. "After a man has been prowling through the dark, lonely woods for days, even weeks perhaps, eyes and ears straining for Indians, there's no sight quite so welcome as the smoke rising up from a civilized chimney in a clearing. And your clearing will be the first break in the woods to the northwest, after leaving Deerfield."

Meantime, in the sitting-room, Mrs. Rice was being entertained by some of the Deerfield women, who had dropped in, with reminiscences of the fearful experiences of themselves or their families when Deerfield was captured in 1704. At last Mrs. Hoyt bethought herself and said:

"Perhaps we ought not to fill your head with these sad stories of Indian warfare, Mrs. Rice. I suppose it was the fact that you are going out into the wilderness to settle that started us on that strain."

"The cruel doings of Indians are no news to me," said Mrs. Rice. "Rutland had its turn, you remember, when the minister and several others were slain, and Phineas Stevens and his brother carried off captive. Hardly

any part of our province has been exempt from their ravages."

But though Mrs. Rice spoke thus bravely, the Deerfield stories haunted her dreams, and gave her but broken rest that night.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE STORY OF THE COUNCIL.

THE mild and beautiful evening, delightful after the long shutting in of the winter, tempted all the young people outdoors. Freedom French, Rebecca and Mary Nims, and their little niece Esther went to walk with Nabby Hoyt and the Rice girls up into the north meadow near Broughton's Pond, hoping to find some arbutus blossoms or spring beauties and liverwort. By a strange coincidence, ere long young Matthew Clesson and Amos Allen strolled out the same way and joined the girls, helping them gather flowers and walking home with them.

The older Arms and Wells boys, comrades of the ball game, were strolling with Jonathan Hoyt and Aaron and Sylvanus Rice around the Hoyts' large home lot.

"What are these, Jonathan?" asked David Wells, kicking some black, half-burned logs that lay scattered about on the ground. "Remains of the council fire?"

"You've guessed right," answered Jonathan. "This was the identical spot of the great council fire."

"What council was that?" asked Aaron.

"The great council with the Indians, held here in August, 1735," said Jonathan. "I remember it well, though I was only ten years old at the time. That was the greatest time Deerfield ever saw, or ever will see, I guess."

"Tell us about it, Jonathan," said Sylvanus, while the boys perched themselves about on the logs as seats. The air was soft and balmy, the moon shone brightly down, and from the swamps near by came the hoarse "croak, croak" of the frogs, pleasantly suggestive of spring.

"Our province thought it high time to renew the treaty of peace made with the Indians at Albany in 1724, and refresh their memories with gifts of wampum belts, blankets, etc.," said Jonathan. "Deerfield was fixed on as the best place for the meeting, being a half-way point for our men from the Bay and the Indians. My mother and the other women in town worked themselves almost to death cooking and preparing to entertain such a host. A great tent was erected here, on my father's

lot, for the council, with the Union flag flying at the tent head.

“It was an imposing sight, I tell you, boys, when Governor Belcher, with ten of his council, and as many or more members of the General Court, rode into town. The governor wore a leathern waistcoat and riding breeches, laced with gold in the handsomest manner, and a fine jockey cloth coat, leather color, his hat, shoes, buckles, and stockings all to match. His suite were dressed almost as finely, and they made an imposing spectacle as they rode in at the south end. But, after all, we boys were more taken up with the Indians. Some of them had been here a month, others had kept coming in, and now they were all out thronging the street, when Governor Belcher and suite rode in.”

“How many Indians came?” asked Sylvanus.

“Oh, a hundred or more!” said Jonathan. “It made some of the women feel uneasy to see such a body of fierce-looking savages among us. Ontosogo was chief of the Iroquois who came from Caghnawaga, and there were a number of the St. Francis Indians with them, twenty-seven in all. Then Weenpauk, chief of the Scatacocks, brought with him, besides numbers of his own tribe, seventeen Mohegans,

and Cuncapot, chief of the Housatonic Indians, brought not only twenty-three of his warriors, but also twenty of their squaws and several children."

"Where did such a troop of them sleep?" asked Aaron. "And how long were they here?"

"A place was assigned to them at the north end, beyond Parson Ashley's, near Broughton's Pond. The squaws made nothing of setting up their wigwams, and there they camped out, and were soon as much at home as if we had always had an Indian village here."

"I suppose there was an Indian village here in good earnest once," said Aaron.

"No doubt," said Jonathan. "The council was in session a week, but some of the Indians were here a month. As our people had to keep the Indians well supplied with food (save as the warriors hunted a little), and drink too, for that matter, it was no easy task. It was so important to please the Indians, it was necessary they should have the best of everything. I well remember one Indian word, because I heard it so often then; 'squawottuck,' meaning 'more rum.'"

"I wish I had been here to see them," said Sylvanus.

"It was a great spectacle when the council

assembled in the tent, right here, where we are sitting," said Jonathan. "A huge fire blazed high in the middle of the tent, for, though it was summer, there must be a council fire. Governor Belcher was seated at a table one side the tent, with his suite beside him. The governor was magnificently dressed. He wore a yellow grogram suit (made in London, 't was said), lined with white shagrine, and at his side he wore a sword knot, cane string and cockade, made of orange ribbon, richly flowered with silver and crimson."

"The Indians must have opened their eyes at seeing so much magnificence," said Aaron.

"They did, and so did the great throng of spectators who filled the tent. As the Caghna-waga Indians came in they were formally received by the governor, he shaking hands with each. They were then seated opposite the governor, on the other side the council fire. Joseph Kellogg had come down from Fort Dummer to act as interpreter, and my father was sometimes called on to aid, as he speaks the Indian language perfectly. Rev. Stephen Williams of Longmeadow was here, and he also acted at times as interpreter, having been a captive in 1704, living over a year with the Indians at St. Francis. Some of the

St. Francis Indians who came here had been his playmates during his captivity, and were glad to see him again.

"The governor made a welcoming speech, during which he presented Ontosogo with three belts of wampum. The first, he said, was to wipe away all tears from the eyes of his children, the Indians; the second, to open their throats that they might speak with freedom; the third was to wipe away all blood, and comfort them under past difficulties. I remember it well, for we boys played 'council' for a long time afterwards, and I often had to be the governor and lay down the wampum."

"And I was generally Ontosogo, with a lot of rooster feathers stuck in my hair, and my red comforter tied around my waist," said David Wells, laughing.

"While the governor was talking," continued Jonathan, "the Indians sat with great dignity, looking unmoved. When his speech was finished, Ontosogo rose, saying: 'We have come at your Excellency's call. We are glad we got safe here, after a long and tedious journey over hills and high mountains.' He then presented, in his turn, three strings of wampum to the governor, saying: 'The way is now clear, the door open for freedom of speech; but we have

nothing to say at present. We were sent for, and it is not customary for those that are drawn by the hand to speak first, therefore we wait to hear what your Excellency has to say.'

"The governor well knew that he could not hurry matters. Indian etiquette would not allow him to broach business on the first day, which must be devoted to preambles and compliments. So he said he should be ready to speak to them on the morrow. Then he invited them to drink with him the health of King George, and you may be sure the Indians were not backward about accepting the invitation. That ended the council for the first day."

"How tedious it seems, when the whole business could easily have been settled in one meeting!" said Aaron.

"When you're with Indians you have to do as the Indians do," said Jonathan. "The next day, Thursday, the Housatonics appeared, led by their chief, Cuncapot, and about the same ceremonies were gone through with them. Later the governor received the Scatacocks and Mohegans, eighty in all. After the usual preambles, the governor said he was glad to see so many of King George's subjects in health and peace here together. He reminded them that the Massachusetts government had estab-

lished a trading post for them at Fort Dummer, under Captain Kellogg's care, that they might be well supplied and not cheated in their trade, and that a minister of the gospel had also been sent to Fort Dummer, that the Indians might be instructed in the knowledge of Jesus Christ. In closing he said: 'I hope you have been well entertained, and that everything has been agreeable to you since you have been here.' On this old Weenpauk, with a complacent look, rose, saying:

"'In the morning we eat, are well entertained at noon, and at night lie down to sleep; we sleep well, and are in good health.'"

"That speaks well for Deerfield hospitality," said Aaron.

"It speaks well for the hard work done by our Deerfield women and men," said Jonathan. "I could n't tell you how many hogs and cattle were slain, to keep those Indians well fed while here. When, at last, the council reached business, the governor told the Indians he had come to renew the treaty of friendship made at Albany, eleven years before, to brighten the chain of friendship between King George and his subjects and the Five Nations, etc. The Indians, on their side, said they were glad the broad way was to be kept open between us,

that there was to be safe passing, no hindrance or stop. The governor then invited them to dine with him the next day, when he said he would give them the present from our government.

“Friday the governor had all the Indians to dine here, in the big tent. A great sight it was. The Indians were brave in feathers, beads, paint, all their finery, and the governor and his suite equally gorgeous in their gold-laced coats and hats, ruffled shirts, and silver-mounted swords. The governor presented the Indians with their gifts, and they, in their turn, made presents to him. The Housatonics gave him a parcel of deerskins, and the other Indians presented nine choice beaver skins. They seemed much pleased with all that had been done for them. Weenpauk said:

“‘We return your Excellency thanks for all favors, and we thank God Almighty that he has given us opportunity to see your Excellency, and so many gentlemen with you. Though we are ignorant, and not capable of seeing for want of understanding, yet we praise God that he has fixed a day — this day — and the time of day, about noon, when the sun shines so bright upon us.’

“Ontosogo said: ‘I salute the governor and

all the gentlemen here. I have been so handsomely treated since I have been with you that I have almost fancied myself in heaven, and I shall not be able to forbear weeping when I leave the governor.'

"The council ended on Saturday."

"Were the Indians suffered to travel hence on the Sabbath?" asked Aaron.

"Oh, no. They were asked to remain over Sunday for the ordination. Governor Belcher told them that Sunday was God's day, so they had best tarry till Monday, when they should be provided with whatever they needed for their journey, provisions as well as skins to make moccasins, adding that he expected them to be very careful in properly observing the Lord's day. They must keep it holy, and attend the public worship both parts of the day."

"Who was ordained?" asked Sylvanus.

"The Rev. John Sargent was set apart to be a minister to the Housatonic Indians. It was felt to be most appropriate to have the ordination at this time, when so many Indians could be present. Never did our meeting-house, or any other, I guess, see such a sight. It was packed full. The Caghnawagas, the Scatacooks, and the Mohegans were all present, while the

Housatonics were seated by themselves in one of the galleries. The governor and his suite sat together in state, and in the pulpit were Rev. William Williams of Hatfield, Rev. Nathaniel Appleton from Cambridge, Rev. Samuel Williams of Longmeadow, Rev. Ebenezer Hinsdale, chaplain at Fort Dummer, and our own Parson Ashley. Mr. Appleton preached the sermon. Rev. Stephen Williams gave Mr. Sargent the right hand of fellowship, after which he turned and addressed the Housatonics in the Indian language, asking them, if they desired Mr. Sargent for their minister, to show some sign. Thereupon the Housatonics all rose and stood, to show their acceptance of him. Rev. Mr. Williams preached the sermon in the afternoon to the same crowded house."

"Well, those were truly great times in Deerfield," said Aaron, "and a terrible tax it must have been entertaining so many, whites as well as Indians, for so long."

"It was," said Jonathan. "But our people, after all Deerfield had suffered, were ready to do anything to stave off war and hold the Indians friendly. Their labor was not in vain, for peace has lasted ever since, for eighteen years."

"A similar council with the Indians was held

at Fort Dummer two years later, which no doubt helped," said David Wells.

"No doubt," said Jonathan. "Indians are something like children. They have short memories, and need reminding now and then."

"I'm sure I hope peace will last eighteen years longer," said Aaron. "In our new home in the wilderness, I fear we should be much exposed to Indian attacks, in case of another war."

"You could hardly remain there in case of war," said Jonathan.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For full detail of this council, see Thompson's "History of Greenfield."

## CHAPTER IV.

### ON TO THE WESTWARD.

THE Rices were up before daylight Monday morning. Captain Rice and the boys had to feed their cattle and horses, pack and strap on bundles and packages. The Hoyts also rose early to give the travellers a good breakfast before starting. All the family were at the door, when, just as the sun appeared above the flank of Mount Pocumtuck, sending down warm, cheerful rays, the horses were brought around, the women helped into their sidesaddles, while the boys vaulted lightly on their horses' backs, with no use for the horse-block, and the travellers were ready to set forth.

A chorus of "Good-bye, Aaron," "Good-bye, Jonathan," "Good-bye, Dinah," and so on, arose from the young folks, and, after many hearty thanks from the Rices to the Hoyts for their hospitable kindness, the procession of cattle and horses started, moving slowly down the street to the south.

More than one Deerfield woman watched the

little company with moistened eye and sympathetic glance, thinking:

"How hard for that woman and her children to go so far out into the wilderness to dwell, away from all other settlers! How can Mrs. Rice do it?"

The travellers turned below the meeting-house, passed Captain Williams's store on the corner, and took the lane running west, known later as the "Albany Road."

The young folks, far from feeling gloomy at the prospect before them, were exhilarated with a sense of adventure, anticipating the novel life awaiting them. The boys had enough to do in managing their own horses and aiding their father with the cattle. When, near the burying ground, some of the cattle straggled out of the path and fell to grazing the tempting new grass, Bose made himself useful, surrounding, so to speak, the stray creatures on all sides, barking vigorously at their heels, and chasing them back into line, returning to Captain Rice, wagging his tail and looking up at him as if to say:

"Am I not a fine dog?"

"Old Bose thinks he is doing this all himself," said Artemas.

"He is a great help, any way. Good dog,

Bose," said the captain, whereat the dog scampered an extra turn ahead and back, from pure joy.

"Yonder, children, are the graves of Rev. John Williams and his wife," said Captain Rice, pointing towards the burying ground. "He was the 'Redeemed Captive,' you know. He lived in the house where his son, Capt. Elijah Williams, now dwells."

"And his wife was slain by the Indians," said Mrs. Rice, looking with mournful interest towards the graves.

"Yes," said the captain briskly, "but that was almost forty years ago, when the country was newer, and the Indians more numerous and savage. Many of the Indians are in friendly alliance with us now. Sergeant Hawks was telling me last night that, at Fort Dummer, there are several Indian chiefs regularly commissioned by our government as part of the garrison."

"I would not trust their friendship far, in case of war," said Mrs. Rice.

"You must try to keep up heart, and trust in God, Sarah," said the captain. "I believe we shall yet praise Him for the help of His countenance in this new venture we are making."

"I wish I had your hopeful spirit, Moses," said the wife.

The path crossed the meadow to the ford. The Deerfield River, swollen by spring rains and melting snow, looked dark, deep, and rapid.

"Oh, father," cried Tamar, "I'm afraid to ride through this river!"

"What ails you, child? You've forded more than one river on our way from Rutland."

"But this one looks so deep and angry."

"You need not fear, Tamar. I suspect this river is like some people, not so bad as it looks. First we must get the cattle over, and then we will see about the folks."

Much aided by Bose, who barked himself hoarse in the good cause, the cattle were urged into the stream, and then Tamar saw that the water did not reach their bodies.

"It isn't as deep as it looks," she said, reassured.

"Tuck your dress well up around you, Tamar," said her mother.

"Dinah will need to take a reef in her underpinning, I guess," said Aaron, laughing at his tall sister.

"Don't worry about me," said Dinah. "I can take care of myself."

So speaking, she contrived to draw up her

knees, tuck her dress skirt around her, and, urging her horse boldly into the stream, was the first one across.

"Three cheers for Dinah!" called Sylvanus.

"Come on, Tamar," called back Dinah. "That's nothing at all. I didn't even wet the sole of my shoe or the hem of my garment. If I can ride through dry, you surely can."

"Hold your horse up firmly, Tamar," said her father, "lest he step on a stone and stumble. I will ride beside you."

Thus encouraged, the timid Tamar rode through the swollen stream. There was a great splashing as all the horses plunged in, encouraged by many a kind word from their riders, made their way stoutly against the strong current, and scrambled up the opposite bank.

"I must confess I did not enjoy that ford much better than Tamar," said her mother.

"Do we have to cross the Deerfield again, father?"

"No, our path lies on this side the rest of the way."

"How many miles farther is it?" asked Dinah.

"Twenty-two, and much of the way up hill."

"Do you think it possible we can reach our new home to-day?" asked Mrs. Rice.

"I think so. After we get up these hills, past the Salmon Fishing Falls, there's a long, level stretch beside the river, all the last part of the way, where we can make better speed. The first part is the most tedious."

The road was only a rude and narrow bridle path, which, leaving the river, struck up into the mountains, following, part of the way, a little stream that came tumbling down the gorge. It was wholly through primeval forest as yet untouched by the hand of man; not a house, or fence, or sign of habitation along the way.

"This is the part of Deerfield called 'North West,'" <sup>1</sup> said Captain Rice, as the riders wound slowly on, in Indian file, up hill, through the wooded gorge. "I suppose this path is the old Indian trail to the west. 'Tis so with most of the roads in the province. The Indians knew the hills and streams and the shortest cuts, and we can do no better than follow their trails."

"I wonder if we shall see any Indians to-day," said Artemas.

"If we do, I will give them a taste of this,"

<sup>1</sup> Now Shelburne.

said Sylvanus, dropping his reins, and lifting the loaded gun, which, like his father and Aaron, he carried across his saddlebow, affecting to aim into the woods.

"You'd best put that gun down. You'll shoot some one before you know it," said Aaron.

"Sylvanus is too young to be trusted with a loaded gun in journeying, I think," said Mrs. Rice, looking anxiously at the boy and gun.

"Mother!" exclaimed the indignant Sylvanus. "As if I did n't know how to handle a gun!"

"Put up your gun, boy," said his father. "You would get us into serious trouble if you fired at an Indian, as the laws of the province deal strictly with any one who kills or wounds an Indian in time of peace. If we chance upon an Indian, it will be only a friendly Indian, out hunting or fishing, and we must speak him fair. We want to keep the good will of the Indians in our new home."

The path now came out of the gorge at a high point where a gap in the woods gave the travellers their first view of the surrounding country, so wholly shut in had the narrow bridle path been by hills and forest. But now they saw far below them, stretching out towards the eastern hills, a fair green valley smiling in the sun, mostly covered with the

original woods, and bounded on all sides by forest-clad mountains. Far off in the north-east one summit, Mount Monadnock, blue in the distance, rose grandly above the nearer ranges.

“Why, I see some houses down there, and smoke rising, and what look like open meadows and a clearing,” exclaimed Dinah, pointing to a few roofs rising above the woods to the south-east. “What place is that, father?”

“That is the Green River District<sup>1</sup> of Deerfield,” said the captain. “The Deerfield settlers, in their scouts to the north, soon discovered that there were fertile meadows and upland plains along the Green River, which is a branch of the Deerfield, flowing into it but a little above the ford we have just crossed. And so these lands began to be taken up and cultivated fifty years or more ago; and Capt. Jonathan Wells built a gristmill there, on Green River. Two or three times, during the Indian wars, the settlers have had to abandon everything, and take refuge in Deerfield stockade. But now, after this long interval of peace, the settlement is beginning to take firm root.”

“I should think the people would feel afraid, so far away from Deerfield village,” said Tamar.

“They have a fort of their own now, and

<sup>1</sup> Now Greenfield.

feel quite independent," said the captain. "Lieutenant Hoyt was telling me that the Green River settlers are getting uneasy, want a minister and a schoolhouse of their own; and some of them even talk about being set off from Deerfield as a separate town. But the Deerfield men are not disposed to encourage any such uneasy notions."

"Truly the Green River valley is sightly to look upon," said Mrs. Rice, as the horses began again to climb the steep, rocky path. "I could almost wish, father, that you had bought lands here, instead of venturing so far away into the northwestern wilderness."

"The good lands were all pre-empted here long ago. At Boston Township No. 1 we are the first comers, and have the first choice of lands. I know no other place where I could buy twenty-two hundred acres of so desirable land as at the spot where I have cast in our lot; situated right on a river too, with a fine mill brook tumbling down through it, straight from the hills."

"I do not question that the land is good," said Mrs. Rice, "but the place is so isolated."

"We shall have plenty of neighbors soon," said the hopeful captain. "Our going out will bring others. Eleazer Hawks told me last

night that he was thinking of buying lands near us, and you heard Othniel Taylor say that he and his brother have already bought. Keep up your courage, wife."

"I will try," said Mrs. Rice, smiling back at her resolute husband.

Sylvanus was riding a little ahead of the others. One side the path was a ridge covered with a mingled growth of oaks and evergreens. On the sunny exposure of the ridge's slope, Sylvanus, to his delight, saw a flock of partridges. Up went Sylvanus's ready gun, but before he fired the mother partridge gave a warning cry, and every bird vanished as if by magic. The young ones scattered and hid under dead leaves or between roots of trees, while the mother, flying up into a tree, stretched herself erect and stood motionless, seeming a part of the brown tree trunk.

The smoke of the gun cleared away, and not a single partridge, dead or alive, was to be seen.

"Well, I never!" exclaimed Sylvanus. "I'd like to know where those partridges went to. There's witchcraft in it. I had made up my mouth for roast partridge for dinner."

"You'll have to put up with fried pork, like the rest of us, I guess, Sylvanus," said Aaron.

"You don't catch a weasel asleep, or a hen partridge either."

The sun was now high overhead. The horses began to stop often to rest on steep pitches, and old Dolly, at such times, turned her head and looked back appealingly at her master.

"Dolly thinks it's about time to stop and rest," said Artemas.

"So do we all," said Tamar. "I feel all doubled up, sitting in this sidesaddle so long. I believe I've grown to it."

"You're always fussing, Tamar," said Artemas. "You're not the only one that's tired, I guess."

"Don't quarrel, children," said the mother. "Now we have only ourselves to look to, we must try to be patient and pleasant, and help each other all we can. Tamar is not very strong, and this is a hard jaunt for an eleven-year-old girl. You're a boy, Artemas."

"Yes, and I'm glad of it," said Artemas.

"We must push on to the Salmon Fishing Falls before we stop," said the captain. "We must be nearly there, I judge."

"There's the Deerfield River again," said Sylvanus, pointing ahead.

The path, which had steadily mounted up hill much of the way, now ran along a high

ridge. Far below, on the left, the travellers saw the Deerfield, crowding its way through a narrow gorge between high hills, its torrent foaming madly down over the great stones and rocks that obstructed its wild bed.

"It cannot be far now to our halting place," said the captain.

All pushed on more cheerily now, and in a short time came out of the woods at the Salmon Fishing Falls,<sup>1</sup> where the Deerfield rushed down forty feet over the huge rocks that tried in vain to stem its current, a wild and beautiful natural cascade.

"Here we are, at last," said the captain.

Every one dismounted, the packs were taken off the tired horses, and they and the cattle fell eagerly to browsing the fresh grass in the open spot beside the falls where the halt was made.

"Boys, start a fire for your mother, while Aaron and I attend to the horses," said the captain.

Sylvanus and Artemas found plenty of dry sticks and driftwood close at hand. Beside a rock, in a sheltered nook, Sylvanus skilfully erected a tent-like pile of dead leaves and dry twigs the size of a teacup. In the tinder box, with the deftness born of experience, he soon

<sup>1</sup> Now Shelburne Falls.

struck a spark of fire, which, dropped on the little pile of leaves, set it ablaze. The boys added small sticks, then larger ones, until soon a high fire blazed brightly on the river's bank, sending aloft a long trail of blue smoke.

Mrs. Rice and the girls brought out from the packs bread and salt pork, some wooden trenchers, and a large frying pan, preparing to cook the simple meal.

Bose, that, tired though he was, could not resist trotting about, investigating everything, now ran towards the western woods, barking furiously and seeming greatly excited.

"Your guns, boys," said the captain, taking his own, and starting for the spot where Bose ran up and down, barking furiously.

"It's a bear! I know it's a bear!" cried Tamar, looking wildly around for refuge.

"Don't cry, Tamar. We can easily climb trees," said Dinah.

"Of course you can, you're so tall," said Tamar.

Artemas lost no time in acting on his sister's suggestion, mounting up into a small tree near by with the agility of a young monkey.

"Your father will protect us," said Mrs. Rice, standing her ground, but looking pale and anxious.

Now the captain and his sons saw coming through the aisles of the naked woods between the tree trunks the tall, lithe form of an Indian. As he drew near, seeing the guns, he raised his open hands, weaponless, saying:

"My brother, put up your gun. Umpaumet comes in peace, not in war."

"Down, Bose. Keep quiet, sir! Welcome, Umpaumet! What brings Umpaumet here?"

"Umpaumet was fishing in the Pocumtuck. He saw the smoke of his white brother's camp-fire from afar, and came to give him greeting, and to bring this present."

So saying, Umpaumet laid down at the captain's feet three fine shad.

"Thank you, Umpaumet," said the captain. "Here is a present in return, of tobacco for Umpaumet to smoke in his pipe. Umpaumet must come and dine with his white brother."

The wily Indian gave a grunt of satisfaction. This was exactly what he had planned. His mouth had watered from afar for a taste of the white man's bread.

Artemas hastened to slide down from his tree, hoping that Sylvanus had not noticed his ascent. Aaron and Sylvanus tried to keep Bose quiet, but he persisted in growling and sniffing suspiciously about the Indian while the

boys tried to talk with him, interested to hear what he had to say.

Captain Rice, in the mean time, sought his wife, who asked, anxiously:

"Who is that savage, Moses? What does he want? It frightens me to see him."

"It is Umpaumet. I saw him last summer when up here. He is friendly, a Scatacook who sometimes comes down from Fort Dummer way to hunt and fish along the Deerfield. You must learn not to mind Indians, Sarah. See, Umpaumet has brought us a present, some shad."

"Shad!" exclaimed Mrs. Rice, rather contemptuously. "Mrs. Hoyt said that Deerfield people do not think it respectable to eat shad. It is considered to show that people are short of pork if they eat such a common fish. Only poor folks eat shad," she said.

"It will never do to anger Umpaumet by slighting his present," said the captain. "You'll have to cook them, Sarah."

"I don't care if shad are not respectable," said Dinah. "I'd rather have them than fried pork any time. I'll cook them, father."

When the dinner was cooked, all sat around the fire on logs or stumps, eating from their wooden trenchers with a hearty appetite, after their long ride. The fried shad sent out so

tempting an odor that it found favor with all; even Mrs. Rice, safe from neighborly criticism, relenting enough to partake of it with evident relish. Bose sat near Umpaumet, keeping vigilant guard over him, yet finding time to snap up the scraps often thrown him by his boy and girl friends.

Umpaumet, his trencher piled high, sat a little apart, greedily devouring his dinner. In his woodland wanderings seldom did kind fate send in his way so good a meal. Twice was his trencher piled high, and when, at last, he stalked off into the western woods, Mrs. Rice said:

“I hope I shall not be called on often to cook for Indians!”

“All the women in our new settlements have to tolerate the Indians when they come around,” said the captain.

The boys helped the girls wash the dishes by simply taking them down to the river, scouring them with sand, then rinsing them well, and turning them up in the hot sun to dry.

An hour was spent resting beside the falls, whose murmur soothed the captain and Mrs. Rice into welcome naps. The girls rambled around, picking wild flowers, or watching the boys, who were throwing stones and sticks into

the river, to entice Bose to plunge in after them, a challenge Bose was not slow to accept.

The open meadow where the Rices had stopped was surrounded on all sides by woods, running up to the tops of hills and mountains that towered grandly on both sides of the river.

"I suppose, as these are called Salmon Fishing Falls, there are plenty of salmon to be caught here," said Aaron.

"Next spring the river will be full of them," said the captain. "The Deerfield people come up here and camp out for the fishing. They tell me it is a sight worth seeing when a big salmon goes leaping up these falls. A fine country this, overflowing with richness!"

"You look at it with partial eyes, father," said Mrs. Rice.

"This is a grand water power, anyway," said Aaron.

"Some day it will be improved, and mills and factories, a great city, perhaps, spring up right here where we sit," said the captain.

"I doubt if any one ever moves up among these hills to settle," said Mrs. Rice.

"Wait and see," said the indomitable captain.

Their nooning over, much refreshed by their rest, the travellers rode on. Ere going many miles they reached the place the captain had

described, where the bridle path ran along near the river, often through stretches of meadow land, covered now with a dense growth of the brown, tangled wild grass of last year, but evidently rich and fertile. The mountains each side grew higher as they went on, and began to close in nearer to the river.

"This is comfortable travelling, as you said, and very pleasant," said Mrs. Rice.

"We are now in the limits of Boston Township No. 1," said the captain. "I am glad your first impressions are favorable, Sarah."

Though travelling was easier now, there were still several weary miles for tired horses and travellers to traverse. The sun was already sinking behind a high range of mountains to the west, when the captain, who rode in advance, turned his horse, and, riding back beside his wife, said:

"Here we are at last, Sarah. Yonder is our new home."

## CHAPTER V.

### THE NEW HOME.

MRS. RICE, looking where the captain pointed, saw a large log house standing well up on the hillside to the right. Before the house rose a tall young buttonball tree. The stumps still standing thickly on the hillside around the house showed where the woods had been cleared away for the new home. Beyond the clearing stretched dense woods to the top of the steep hill or mountain, on whose southern slope the house was situated. The last rays of the setting sun lingered pleasantly on the place.

"There could not be a more desirable site for a house," said the captain. "It is warm and sheltered, protected from the north winds by the hill behind, and lying fair to the sun the year round. And a better outlook no man could wish."

"You have certainly chosen wisely," said Mrs. Rice. "It is a sightly situation."

If her heart sank within her in pangs of

homesickness at the loneliness of the place, she gave no sign, but tried to keep a brave face. She could not fail to notice that the upper story of the house projected slightly over the lower, and through the projection thus formed were loopholes, where guns could be thrust through to repel besiegers.

The captain, seeing her gaze fixed on the loopholes, hastened to explain:

"You see, Sarah, I felt it prudent, since we are so far out here by ourselves, to build the house in a defensible manner. But the chances are we shall never be forced to use it as a fort."

"I pray God not," said Mrs. Rice.

The children were all charmed with the new home.

"Oh, isn't it pleasant here!" cried Dinah.

"I knew you would like it," said Aaron.

"Let's hurry, Artemas, and see if we can't be the first to step over the new threshold," said Tamar.

"Do you see this buttonball?" asked Sylvanus. "I slept under that tree when I was the only white person in the whole region. We camped nights under the tree last summer, while we were building the house, and one night, when father and Aaron had been obliged to go to Deerfield, I slept here alone."

"I'm thankful I knew nothing about it," said his mother.

"Were n't you afraid, Sylvanus?" asked Tamar.

"No. I was so tired I didn't stop to think much about anything. I rolled up in my blanket and went right to sleep, and the next thing I knew, it was morning and the birds were singing in the buttonball tree over my head loud enough to wake the dead; at least, they woke me, and I was dead asleep."

As the captain and wife rode up to the house, Mrs. Rice noticed a fine spring gushing out of the hillside in front of the house, just below the buttonball tree.

"That is a good thing," she said heartily. "I am glad enough to see such a fine spring of never-failing water near by."

"I located the house here partly on account of that spring," said the captain. "It is the best of water, cool and sweet and never failing."

They had now alighted before the door, and the captain said:

"Stop a bit, wife, and look about you."

Turning, Mrs. Rice saw a beautiful view spread out before her. Below stretched a wide strip of open meadow, through which

flowed the Deerfield River. Beyond the river rose picturesque mountain ranges and peaks, covered with primeval forests, many great pines and hemlocks making the hills dark green, even so early in the spring.

"It is most sightly," said Mrs. Rice. "We shall have a pleasant home here, by and by, when we get more settled and finished."

"I am glad you feel so, Sarah," said the captain. "Of course, everything is rude now, only a beginning made. But you and I and the children, thank God, are well and strong, and not afraid of work, or of roughing it, and gradually we shall get comfortably fixed."

The children, meantime, had raced into the house, and were rushing around, examining everything. When their parents entered, Dinah and Tamar were climbing backwards down the rude, home-made ladder which led to the loft above.

"The boys wanted we should go upstairs and see their bedroom," said Dinah. "There is plenty of room for us girls to have a room up there too."

"I shall partition one off for you as soon as I can get to it," said her father.

"See these stools and this table the boys made last summer, mother," said Tamar.

The stools and table were made of slabs, hewn out of large tree trunks, supported by round legs with the bark on, cut from the branches.

"We made them rainy days," said Aaron. "They are rather rough, but I'll warrant they are strong."

"They will answer nicely until we can get better," said Mrs. Rice, pleased with her boys' ingenuity.

The log house had two large rooms downstairs, a kitchen and a living-room, each having a big stone fireplace, with a small bedroom built in a lean-to, opening out of the kitchen. The floors were made of rough slabs hewn out of logs with the axe. Wooden pegs, driven into the walls, supplied the place of closets. A trap door in the kitchen floor, with a rude ladder beneath, led to the cellar below, while another ladder in the corner went up to the square opening in the ceiling above, which gave access to the loft.

"This is really better than I expected, Moses," said Mrs. Rice. "We can make ourselves more comfortable here than I supposed possible."

"I thought you wouldn't find it so bad as you feared," said the captain, rubbing his hands with satisfaction.

The tired horses were thankful to be unloaded, and turned out to graze on the new grass springing up among the stumps surrounding the house. The boys soon had a bright fire blazing, which cast a rosy light over the rude interior of the cabin, giving a homelike air even to the rough walls of logs, whose chinks were filled in with plaster. As soon as supper was eaten, the beds were spread on the floors, and ere long the tired travellers were sleeping as soundly as if in palatial quarters.

The days were now so full of work for everybody that there was no time to be homesick or discontented. The captain and his boys hastened to break up the fertile meadows, and plant corn, rye, barley, and flax, for the first necessity was to secure supplies for the coming winter. As they had time, they sowed English grass and clover seed to supplant the rank, wild grass growing rampantly on every open spot. The cattle were, at present, pastured in the unfenced woods near the house.

“Whenever there’s nothing else to do,” said Sylvanus one day, as he came in lugging two pails of water from the spring for his mother, one in each hand, “we can always chop down trees. Between firewood and fencing, we are not likely to get out of work right away. Father

wants to fence in a tract of that cleared land behind the house for a pasture as soon as he can, and we must finish the barn before winter."

"The wilderness is no place for lazy folks, that is certain," said Mrs. Rice, as she stepped briskly back and forth at her loud-humming wheel.

"No one can accuse us of laziness," said Dinah, who was making bread.

"I know what I wish," said Tamar. "I wish you boys could spend time to go hunting. I'm tired of pork and fish."

"You forget those squirrels Dinah shot last week, and the partridges I brought in," said Sylvanus.

"Those were only a taste, just enough to make me hungry for more."

"Tamar is right. We do need some fresh meat," said Mrs. Rice. "Your father will soon have to give you boys a day off in the woods, I guess."

The very next day the captain said to Aaron:

"You boys can have the day off for hunting. Your mother is meat hungry, and some venison will certainly eke out our larder well, if, by good fortune, you bring down a deer."

Artemas begged to go with his brothers, but his mother said:

"You will have to wait until you are older, Artemas. Probably the boys will tramp the woods all day long, up hill and down, and your little legs could n't keep up. Besides, I shall need you at home, if your brothers are away."

"And we might meet a bear, Artemas," said Sylvanus. Then he sang, in mocking tone:

"Artemas he  
Did climb a tree,  
The bear to flee."

"Sylvanus! You should n't make fun of the New England Primer, should he, mother?" said Tamar.

"He must not tease Artemas," said Mrs. Rice.

"I don't care," said Artemas.

"I shall need Artemas myself," said his father. "There will be plenty you can do, Artemas."

And so Artemas found it. By the time he had brought up water for his mother, and chopped and brought in all the wood she needed, and trudged after his father all the afternoon in the heavy ploughed land, dropping corn into the hills for his father to cover, had hunted the cows and driven them in for milking, and helped his father and the girls milk, he was tired enough. His father praised him, and he

was proud to be of use; yet, as he climbed the ladder right after supper for bed, he muttered to himself:

“I might have gone hunting as well as not. I don’t believe I should have been half so tired as I am now.”

Aaron and Sylvanus took their guns, slung their powder horns over their shoulders, hung their bullet and shot bags on their belts, and set forth into the wilderness to the northwest, Sylvanus calling back:

“Fried venison for supper to-night, Tamar.”

“I cannot help feeling anxious about them,” said their mother, as she watched the boys until they disappeared in the dense woods up the river. “I shall feel a good deal better when I see them coming home again.”

“What is there to be afraid of?” said Dinah. “There are no unfriendly Indians now, and as for wild beasts, I guess the boys can take care of any they may meet. I only wish I could go with them.”

“Dinah! How can you talk so!” exclaimed Tamar. “If I were going to wish, I’d wish I could go down to Deerfield and stay awhile. It’s so lonely up here, with only woods and mountains to look at. I want some other little girls.”

It was hardly strange that Tamar pined for

comrades of her own age. True, she and Artemas sometimes played together when not busy, although, as Tamar said:

“Boys don’t know how to play doll.”

But both were equally interested in a new pet, a young raccoon which Sylvanus had succeeded in capturing alive. He was kept in a little pen the children had built for him, with some help from Sylvanus, and was both tame and playful. His wise, knowing little face and cunning ways delighted the children.

Bose had been made to understand that the little coon was one of the family, and not to be harmed. When Tumbler, as the children called him, was let out to play, it was funny to see the struggle between duty and inclination plainly going on in Bose’s mind, as he wistfully watched the coon’s antics, with erect ears and bright eyes, now and then looking up at the children, as if to say:

“You see I can be trusted.”

To Tamar’s delight, her mother now said:

“Your father talks of going down to Deerfield to meeting before long.”

“Oh, good, good! Can we all go?”

“Of course.”

Henceforth a frequent phrase on Tamar’s lips was, “When we go to Deerfield.”

Aaron and Sylvanus, happy in a whole day of freedom, were picking their way up the faintly defined Indian trail along the river's shore to the northwest. Both wore Indian moccasins, having learned by experience that the more softly they trod the more likely were they to come upon game. Nor did they talk much, but trod silently on, eyes and ears alert.

After walking some time they struck a narrow path, hardly traceable, which only close scrutiny revealed to be a path at all. Following it, they were led into a dense swamp of low growing evergreens. Other paths ran in, crossing and recrossing the first, until at last all met in a spot much trampled under the evergreens, where the prints of deer hoofs were numerous.

"An old deer yard, where they herded last winter," said Aaron in low tone. "Wonder if they come here now?"

Sylvanus pointed to a young maple, whose twigs, green with swelling buds, and tender bark looked freshly nibbled.

"Let's separate," whispered Aaron, "and beat up the woods around towards the river. You go to the left. I'll go to the right. We'll meet at the river's bank. We may drive a deer or two out of the wood."

Accordingly the boys separated, going in different directions, stepping softly, trying not to snap a twig or rustle a bush. Low growing branches they lifted carefully, dropping them behind them as they passed on, instead of brushing recklessly through the obstruction.

At last Sylvanus came to a high ridge. Ascending it cautiously, he peeped down into the dark ravine below. These primeval woods were so dense, the great tree tops so interlaced, that only a dim twilight filtered through down into their depths. Straining his eyes to peer around, no living creature could Sylvanus discern.

"I don't believe we shall get a bit of game to-day," thought he.

Just then he fancied he saw something move, a spot of gray down by the little brook in the ravine below. With faster heart-beat he thought:

"I believe that's a deer! At any rate, I'll have a shot at it."

Up went his gun. A loud report rang out, echoing through all the silent forest. The gray object below bounded away, its white tail thrown up like a plume, as it fled with great leaps across to the other side of the ravine.

"I hit her! I know I did," said Sylvanus, as he plunged wildly down into the ravine,

leaped the brook, and rushed panting up the opposite ridge. Yes, beyond, through the tree trunks, he caught glimpses now and then of the white flag of the flying deer, and spots of blood on the dead leaves showed that she was wounded.

No shot had come from Aaron's direction, and Sylvanus could not help thinking with some pride, as he pressed breathlessly on:

"I've beaten Aaron this time, anyway, if I am the younger. But he will never believe it unless I have the deer to show for it. I must get her."

Another ridge now hid the flying deer from sight. Reaching its summit as quickly as he could make his way through the thick tangle of undergrowth, Sylvanus found that he had wholly lost track of the deer. In vain did he strain eye and ear to see or hear some moving object. All was silence, absolute silence, not a sound but the wind sighing through the tree tops, no moving object save waving branches, and a gray squirrel running fearlessly up a tree trunk near by.

Sylvanus had no time or shot to waste on squirrels.

"I must overtake that deer," was his one thought.

## CHAPTER VI.

### LOST.

ON and on pushed Sylvanus in the direction in which he was sure the deer had gone, but still he did not find her. At last, breathless and exhausted, he sank down to rest on a mossy log at the edge of an opening, where some bygone tempest had blown down several huge trees.

Now that he had time to stop and think, a new idea occurred to him.

“I wonder if I am lost! Here I am, I have n’t the least idea where, in these endless woods that run over Hoosac Mountain. I was foolish to chase that deer without noticing which way I was going. What shall I do, I wonder?”

Sylvanus looked around him. In every direction stretched the pathless woods, obscure with the dusky twilight of impenetrable shade. Only here and there could a ray of sunlight struggle through. Thick green moss coated tree trunks, stones, rocks, even the ground. The silence and sense of loneliness were full of awe.

"Let me see. Which way is the river? It must be off here. If I can only make my way back to that, it will guide me. If I could find that brook again, no doubt it runs into the river," thought the anxious boy. He walked hurriedly, in nervous haste, in the direction where he thought the brook ran. Pushing through branches and bushes, he toiled on.

"I am certainly coming to the brook now," he thought, as he pushed through a tangle of bushes out into a more open space. Lo, there was the mossy log on which he had sat! He had simply walked around in a circle to his starting place.

"I will try the opposite direction," he thought. "The brook must be off there."

Striking across the opening, he pushed into the woods, toiling and struggling on, only at last to come out again at that same old log.

Exhausted and frightened, he sank down on it.

"What shall I do?" he thought. "I'm lost, plainly enough. If I keep this up, going around and around in a circle, I shall soon lose my head and be utterly bewildered. I must stop and think what it is best to do."

He sat some moments, in forlorn loneliness and anxiety. Then he thought:

"I believe I'll fire my gun. That will let Aaron know where I am."

The gun rang out through the woods, its report dying away in slowly waning echoes through the solemn silence. Sylvanus listened eagerly for an answering shot, but none came.

"I'll build a fire, and make a smoke. Perhaps that will guide Aaron to me," he thought.

Luckily he had a tinder box in his pocket. Soon he had a fire blazing. Somehow the sight of the ruddy, dancing flames cheered him a little. When the fire was well started, he tore wet moss from his friendly log, and gathered damp leaves from the hollows, piling them on the fire, thus making a thick smudge which rose over the tree tops in a dense blue column.

"Now there's nothing to do but wait," he thought.

The minutes seemed hours, as he sat there in the silence waiting. At last he bethought himself of a thick sandwich of bread and pork scraps which his mother had insisted on his taking, in spite of his remonstrances.

"We shall not need anything, mother. It's no use to bother to take it. We can easily cook some of our game, can we not, Aaron?"

"Yes, if we get any," said Aaron, who was

tucking away sandwiches in the capacious pockets of his leathern doublet.

So Sylvanus had yielded. Those despised sandwiches proved a great comfort, passing away the time, and giving him renewed strength and courage.

Now the fading light showed that the sun must be waning.

"It will be dark soon," thought Sylvanus. "I must make a desperate effort to find the river, or I shall have to spend the night here, with plenty of bears and wild cats for company."

As he rose to begin again his uncertain wanderings, to his joy he heard, far off, the report of a gun fired twice.

"That means that Aaron knows I am lost, and wants to let me know that he is hunting for me," he thought.

He now fired his own gun twice, and soon an answering report came back from his brother, apparently a little nearer.

"We shall scare away the last deer in these woods," thought Sylvanus, "but I don't care. Old Aaron is sure to find me now."

He piled more green stuff on his fire, to increase the smoke, and then sat down to wait impatiently for his brother's arrival, watching the woods intently for the first sign of his com-

ing. At last he heard footsteps crashing through the woods, but, to his surprise, coming from behind him. Turning, there was Aaron.

"How did you happen to come from that quarter?" asked Sylvanus. "I was looking for you this way."

"You were turned around then, and looking the wrong way," said Aaron.

"Why, isn't the river off here?" asked Sylvanus, pointing to his left.

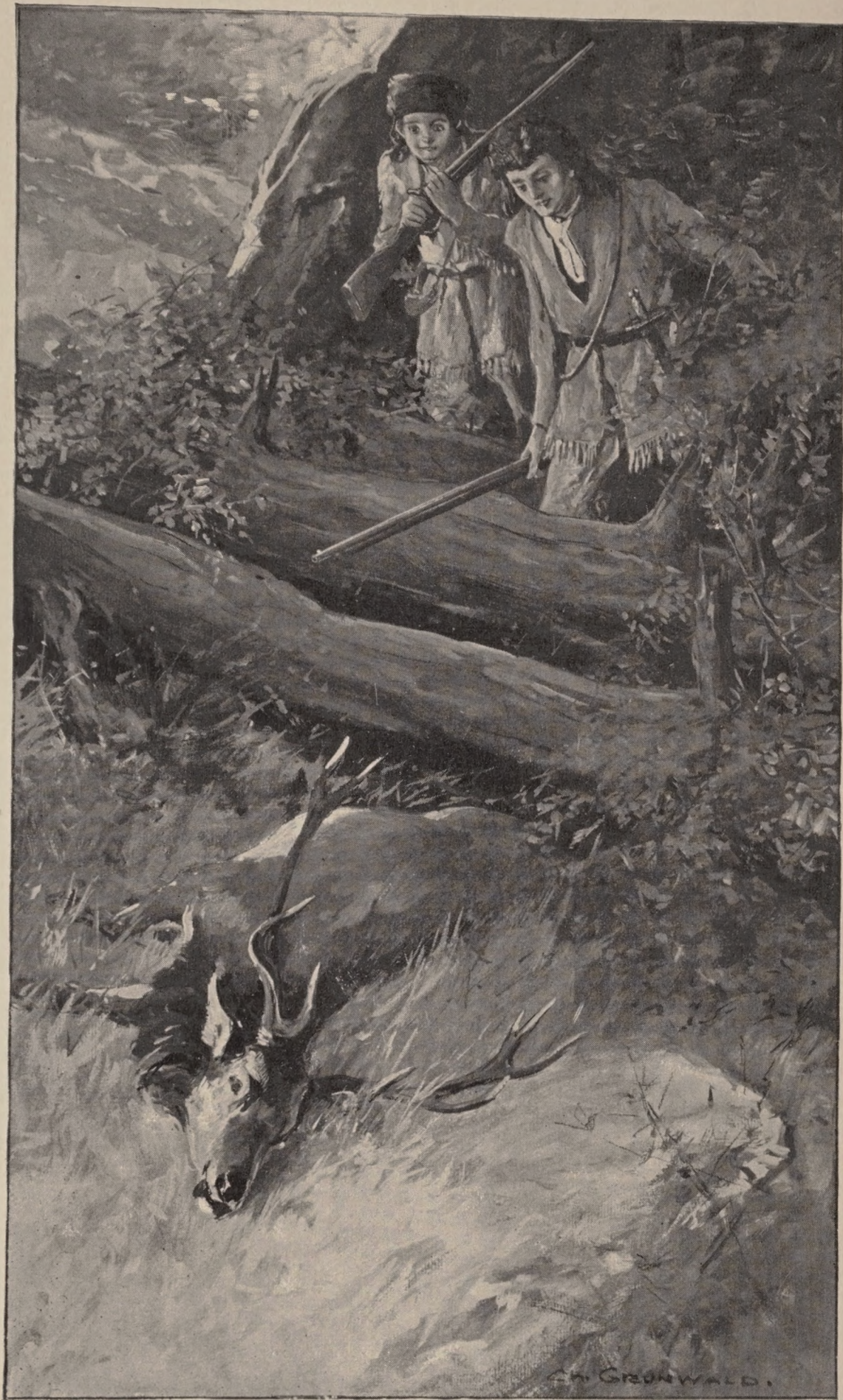
"No, sir, it's over here," said Aaron, pointing in the opposite direction.

"Well, I was completely turned around," said Sylvanus. "If you had not appeared, I was about starting off this way, farther from the river, as it seems."

"You would have brought up on Hoosac Mountain if you had kept travelling in that direction," said Aaron. "Old fellow, you've led me a fine chase, and given me a good scare besides. It's a ticklish thing to be lost in these woods."

"I've had lots of time to think about that," said Sylvanus. "I never was quite so glad to hear anything in my life as that gun of yours."

"Halloo, what's this?" exclaimed Aaron, as he approached the fallen logs. "Why, boy, here's your deer!"



"Sylvanus had fatally wounded the deer." *Page 77.*



Sylvanus had fatally wounded the deer, which, after its frantic race, had dropped dead behind this barrier of logs. Sylvanus, in his delight, forgot that he was tired, and Aaron was almost as pleased as he, having had no success himself.

"That's a fine deer," said Aaron.

"The question is, what shall we do with it?" asked Sylvanus. "I want to take it home, but it's growing dark already."

"We will take the skin anyway, and the best part of the meat," said Aaron. "I think we can manage it, by hurrying. We can follow the river down home, even in the dark."

A deer's skin was too useful to be wasted. The boys drew out their hunting knives, and worked their fastest, dressing and skinning the carcass with a skill given by much practice. Cutting out the best part of the flesh, they tied it in the skin, and ran a stout pole through the bundle. Each took an end of the stick on his shoulder, and, thus laden, they started for the river bank.

The remains of the carcass, left behind in the woods, quickly became the prey of wolves and foxes that glided out from the surrounding thickets, eager for the feast.

Fortunately, Aaron, more experienced in

woodcraft than his brother, had been careful to keep his bearings, and a tough half hour's scramble down hill at last brought the boys to the welcome sight of the Deerfield River, brawling swiftly along over its stony bed, between great wooded hills that rose up into mountains. The dim light made the surroundings seem more grand and awe-inspiring.

"I'm glad to see that river again," said Sylvanus, panting after his hard scramble through the bushes with their heavy load.

"We are as good as home now," said Aaron. "Of course, we've a few miles to walk, and it's a pretty hard pull with this load, after our all-day hunt. But at least we are in no danger of getting lost so long as we stick to the river."

Meantime, at home, Mrs. Rice began to feel uneasy, as supper time came and yet no boys appeared.

"I'm sure it's high time the boys were home, father," she said, when the captain came in with the milk pails.

"The chances are they will not get back until dark," said the captain. "Don't worry, mother. The boys are used to the woods. They are pretty good hunters, if they are my boys."

"I know that," said Mrs. Rice. "But it seems so long since they left home, and so many things might have happened to them."

"Don't borrow trouble, wife. It comes fast enough without borrowing," said the captain, as he seated himself on the settle near the fire, the better to see by its flickering light to mend an ox yoke he had in hand. Here, too, his whittlings could readily be swept into the fire with the broom of birch twigs standing conveniently near.

Tired little Artemas had already climbed the ladder to bed, and the girls and their mother took out their knitting. But conversation lagged and was but fitful, for all were listening for footsteps.

"Hark! I hear footsteps!" exclaimed Mrs. Rice.

The sounds proved to be only old Dolly outside, treading about as she fed on the green grass under the window.

The darkness increased, until thick night settled down, unlit even by starlight, for gray clouds shrouded the sky, promising a rain-storm. The captain dropped his work, took down his gun from the deer horns over the mantel which served as a gun rest, and said, with ill-affected cheerfulness:

"I guess, mother, I'll go up the river a piece and meet the boys."

"Something may happen to you too," said Mrs. Rice, her face pale, but resolutely holding back her tears. "And then we women will be left here all alone."

"Don't you fear, mother. I'll protect you," said Dinah. "You know I can fire a gun as well as any man of them."

The captain departed, and the ominous silence all around, the sense of impotent waiting for trouble, grew more profound. The mother tried to lift her heavy heart in prayer to God for help, whence only help could come. Suddenly Tamar cried:

"Hark, what was that? I'm sure I heard Sylvanus's voice!"

All the anxious watchers now heard, coming faintly from the distance, a cheery cry of:

"Halloo! Halloo! All's well!"

Their hearts leaped at once from deep despondency to greatest joy. Mrs. Rice and the girls hurried to the door, their faces beaming with radiant smiles.

"Thank God for his mercies!" exclaimed Mrs. Rice. "I was sure I never should see my boys again."

"I thought so too, mother," said Tamar.

"Here they come," said Dinah, as into the broad ray of light streaming down the hill from the front door walked Captain Rice and the young hunters.

"Well, madam," said the captain, radiant with the relief from the anxiety which he too had felt, "here are your boys, safe and sound, and with a fine mess of venison for you too."

"I had almost rather never have venison than to suffer such anxiety," said Mrs. Rice.

Dinah hastened to put the long-handled frying pan on the fire, and soon the savory odor of fried venison filled the room, a welcome feast to the tired and hungry boys. They, meantime, were telling their adventures, omitting, however, to mention the fact that Sylvanus had been lost.

"It will only worry mother more the next time we go out," said Sylvanus. "Let's not tell her."

"It is better to say nothing about it to her," said Aaron.

But their father had heard the whole story, and his family prayer that night was full of thanksgiving to God for his loving kindness.

The storm had now broken, and, when the boys went up to bed, the rain was pounding on the roof and dashing against the windows,

while the wind roared through the woods around like a maddened spirit.

Tired Sylvanus, as he sank into bed, sleepy though he was, could but think:

“But for God’s mercy, I might have been lying far out in the woods alone this night. I might never have seen home again.”

And he tried to murmur a prayer of thanksgiving, deeply felt, if he did drop asleep before he reached the “Amen.”

## CHAPTER VII.

### TO MILL AND TO MEETING.

ONE pleasant July afternoon, towards evening, Dinah, going to the spring for water, saw down the river two horsemen riding up the path. As the Rices had seen no human being from the outside world since their arrival, this was an exciting event.

Dinah ran up to the house with long strides.

“Mother!” she cried. “Two men are coming! I saw them but now riding along the path.”

“Two men! I wonder who they can be and what brings them here,” said Mrs. Rice, while Tamar and Artemas, making no secret of their curiosity, ran to the door just in time to see the two strangers alighting under the buttonball tree.

The riders proved to be young Othniel Taylor and his brother Jonathan, who, as has been related, had purchased a tract of land on the river below the captain's. Mrs. Rice, who had met them at Deerfield, gave them cordial welcome.

"You see, Mrs. Rice, we have followed hard on your trail," said Othniel.

"What brings you out here?" asked Mrs. Rice.

"We have come to begin clearing our land, ready for occupation. If all goes well, we hope to be living here by another year."

"You see, Mrs. Rice," said Jonathan, "Othniel is a married man now, so must think of making a home for his pretty bride. He and young Mistress Martha Arms were spliced by Parson Ashley last month."

Mrs. Rice offered hearty congratulations to the blushing Othniel, saying:

"I am rejoiced at the prospect of soon having neighbors. The captain and I will gladly do anything we can to aid you."

"We hoped we could arrange to lodge with you nights while at work up here," said Othniel.

"We will gladly keep you, if you can put up with the poor accommodations which are all we have to offer," said Mrs. Rice.

"We do not come out into the wilderness expecting to find a Boston tavern," said Othniel.

"Settlers in a new region must expect to rough it. What is good enough for you will answer for us."

When Captain Rice and the boys came home, they too were glad to see some one from the

outside world. Othniel had brought the captain several letters and papers which the post-rider from Boston had left at Deerfield post office some weeks previous. The Rices' only link with the outside world was by way of Deerfield. The family had a happy evening over the letters from absent friends, being especially glad to hear from Samuel at Rutland. The newspapers too were of absorbing interest, their intelligence of the world's doings, though weeks old, being still news to the Rices.

"I am so happy," said Mrs. Rice during the evening's talk, "because we may have the Taylors for neighbors next year."

"Oh, we shall have neighbors in plenty all around us before long; another Deerfield village, I expect, springing up here in the valley of the upper Deerfield, to mate that down below," said the captain.

"The captain's hopefulness runs away with him sometimes, I think," said Mrs. Rice.

"Hardly in this case," said Othniel Taylor. "If peace continues, these fertile meadows and wooded uplands along the river are sure to be taken up soon by settlers. Good land is in demand. Settlements are spreading to the north in all directions. Northfield is growing, since we have had peace. At Falltown there

are eight or ten families, and they have a church and a minister of their own. And over here to the northeast, Boston Township No. 2 has a church, and has lately changed its name to Colerain, in honor of Baron Colerain of Ireland, who, 't is reported, has promised to send them a church bell. You know the settlers there are chiefly Scotch-Irish; sturdy folk, the right stuff for pioneers."

"Well, well, No. 2 *is* getting on," said the captain. "We must look out, or she will leave us out of sight. We cannot build a meeting-house yet, but we will ere many years roll by."

"And a mill too, I hope, on our fine mill brook," said Aaron.

"Yes, certainly. All in good time," said the captain. "Rome was n't built in a day."

As Saturday drew near, to her joy Tamar heard her father tell his wife:

"We must go down to Deerfield to mill Saturday, so you and the girls will have a chance to go to meeting."

The Rices had not been to Deerfield since coming to their new home. Mrs. Rice was happy, and the young people greatly excited at this opportunity of getting out into the world again. All were to go except Sylvanus,

who must stay at home to milk the cows and care for things generally.

Bright and early Saturday morning the little cavalcade set out from the log house. The horses were all laden with bags of grain. Sylvanus stood under the buttonball tree watching the others depart, a little wistful as his brothers and sisters called back joyful good-byes to him.

"Take good care of yourself, Sylvanus," said his mother. "Don't run any risks or do anything rash while we are away."

"The boy will be all right, Sarah. The Taylors will be here nights," said the captain.

"I would n't consent to leave him here, but for that," said Mrs. Rice.

"Old Bose will take care of me," said Sylvanus, patting the dog's head. Bose, too, eyed the departing family somewhat wistfully, having been made to understand that he could not accompany them, as he had fully intended.

"It will be your turn to go next time, Sylvanus," said the captain. "We shall be back, God willing, Tuesday night."

"All right, father," said Sylvanus, as he picked up his hoe and set off for the cornfield, thickly set with stumps, where, nevertheless, in the rich forest soil, the young corn was growing rampantly, and the weeds too.

"I'd rather be riding to Deerfield this hot day than hoeing corn here alone, with only old Bose to speak to all day long. But never mind! Some one must stay at home, and, as father said, it will be my turn to go next time," thought Sylvanus.

As the Rices rode on down the river they heard the sound of chopping, and soon came out into the clearing where the young Taylors were hard at work felling the great trees covering their land.

The captain, who rode ahead, suddenly held his hand out to check the rest, crying:

"Halt!"

All drew in their horses, none too soon, as a huge old maple tumbled over with a crash, its green head low on the path just before them.

Jonathan and Othniel, axes in hand, stood by it.

"Hard at it, eh, boys?" said the captain.

"Yes, we're tumbling them down tolerably fast. But it's slow work," said Othniel.

"Steady digging away is what tells.

'Little strokes  
Fell great oaks,'

as Poor Richard says," said the captain.

The Taylors hastened to clear the path for

the Rices to pass. As Mrs. Rice looked around at the opening thickly set with stumps, and scattered over with heaps of great logs saved to build the house that was to be, the branches piled apart for burning, she said:

“I never realized before, Moses, how much work you and the boys did the summer before we came up here.”

As the Rices rode on, Othniel said:

“Tell Martha we are getting on well, and I shall be down home next week for a while.”

The Rices' path, after leaving the river, ran much of the way steeply down hill, and being rough at best, with plenty of rocks cropping out, strewn with rolling stones and fallen branches, the riders had to keep tight reins, and give careful attention to their horses, that, laden as they were, picked their way along cautiously and slowly.

It was nearing sundown when they reached the last descent from the hills leading down to the Deerfield ford. Below them the roofs of Deerfield peered above the tree tops, the gilt weathercock on the meeting-house spire glittering in the last rays of sunlight, which lay warm on the slope of Mount Pocumtuck beyond the village. Through the meadows below wound the beautiful river, their own

Deerfield, and Pine Hill, already darkened by the shadow of the western mountain, rose near by.

"We must hasten on as fast as our tired nags can carry us, or the sun will set, and we shall break the Sabbath," said the captain.

"Surely our lateness will be excused, considering the distance we have had to travel," said his wife.

"Perchance. But I would rather avoid giving occasion for talk if possible," said the captain.

"I know I am glad of one thing," said Tamar, as her horse splashed into the shallow water of the ford. "This river is not so terrifying to ride through as it was last spring."

Who can describe the pleasure felt by these sturdy pioneers, who had dwelt so long apart in the wilderness, in riding up the long street among houses standing thickly each side the way, seeing people they knew here and there? Deerfield seemed like a great city to them.

"Look, Tamar," said Dinah, as they rode past Captain Williams's store. "There is some new flowered stuff for gowns in the store window such as I ne'er saw before. It comes from Boston, I dare say. I would like a gown of it."

"So would I," said Tamar. "And oh, see,

Dinah, there are Freedom French and the Nims girls and Eunice Allen. Eunice must have come up from the Bars to visit her cousins, the Hawksees. How d'ye do, girls?"

Artemas exchanged smiles and friendly nods with Abner Hawks, whom they passed just then. But now their mother checked the children, saying:

"Hush, children. The sun is just setting. It is not seemly to indulge in light talk now."

The last lingering ray of sunlight had indeed vanished from the summit of Mount Pocumtuck when the travellers dismounted at Lieutenant Hoyt's tavern. Tired though they were, the young people would gladly have run out to see some of their friends. But Sunday had begun and must be strictly observed. After talking a little with Jonathan and his sister Nabby, they were glad to go to bed. Captain Rice sat up longer, for he found stopping at the Hoyts', Capt. John Burk of Falltown, Lieutenant Hoyt's son-in-law, and the captain was much interested to learn the progress of this new settlement.

"We are getting ahead well," said Burk, "considering that it is only five years since the Sheldons and I began the settlement. We have a meeting-house and a settled minister, Rev. John Norton, a godly and devout young man.

We have a gristmill and sawmill. New settlers are coming in, and I expect more soon."

"I hope, five years from now, I can tell as good a story for Boston Township No. 1," said the captain.

After the two girls had gone up to bed, Dinah said to Tamar:

"What great piece of news do you suppose Nabby told me to-night? She is engaged to be married!"

"Why, is she? To whom?" asked Tamar, all interest at once.

"To young Matthew Clesson, who lives just across the street. Her father thinks highly of him. Though barely twenty, he has already done brave service as a scout, serving some time up at Fort Dummer under Captain Kellogg, Nabby said."

"When will they be married?"

"This coming fall, probably in October."

"How I wish we could come down to the wedding!"

"So do I, but I fear that is hardly possible."

The Rices felt it a great privilege to attend divine service next day, and worship with fellow believers. Their life of hard toil, isolation, and exposure could hardly have been borne without a strong sense of reliance on God, the

Omnipotent. It was a real help and comfort to lift up their voices in hymn and psalm, to listen to prayer and sermon, to acknowledge humbly their sense of dependence on God by joining in his public worship, in the house consecrated to his service.

Monday morning Captain Rice and the boys, aided by Jonathan Hoyt, started for the mill, three miles south of the village. On reaching the house of Sergeant John Hawks at the South End, out of the yard came a steady old horse, bearing two children, a boy holding the reins, and a girl sitting behind him on the pillion.

"There's Abner Hawks," said Artemas. "Halloo, Abner. Where are you going?"

"Down to the Bars, to carry my cousin Eunice home," said Abner. "If you are going down to mill, I shall be glad to ride along with you."

"So shall I," piped up Eunice's girlish voice, "for I'm terribly afraid of Indians."

"Indians! What nonsense!" said Abner. "No Indians come around now save once in a while some friendly visitors, to trade their furs with Captain Williams. It's as much as six or seven years since that old squaw that lived near your father's disappeared, and she was the last Indian living around here."

"I can't help it," said Eunice. "I'm afraid of them all the same. I never like to play Indian."

"Why, don't you? I love it," said Artemas.

"Samuel and Caleb, and Simeon Amsden are always playing Indian, and teasing me to be an Indian squaw, but I never will. I dread the thought of them," said Eunice.

"Probably you have heard many stories of the old times, and the cruel slaughter of your father's uncle, John Allen, and his wife, in 1704," said the captain.

"Yes," said Eunice, "and they lived right where we do now."

"No doubt that has made an impression you cannot easily shake off. It is not strange if little girls in Deerfield have a terror of Indians," said the captain kindly.

"But it was all so long ago," said Abner.

When, in the south meadow, they crossed over a tiny meadow brooklet, half buried in the long grass overhanging it, Abner called to Artemas:

"Artemas, this is the place where Joseph Barnard was shot by the Indians. The Indians hid in those bushes just above, and when Barnard and Godfrey Nims and the others were nearly here, their horses began to sniff —"

Here, by an odd coincidence, Abner's staid old horse sniffed and looked around in a startled manner. Eunice cried out, and even the bold Abner blenched a little, though he said stoutly:

"Pshaw, Eunice, don't be so silly."

Nevertheless he clapped his heels against the old horse's side, urging her into a slow trot, which brought them close behind Captain Rice's horse. But Abner left the story of Joseph Barnard unfinished.

After riding two miles below the village they came to the Bars, and soon after to the house of Samuel Allen, Eunice's father. The house was a large, two-story dwelling, with a long, sloping roof behind, standing on a slight rise of ground. Fertile green meadows girt the dwelling on all sides, and in front Mount Pocumtuck rose boldly up against the sky.

Out of the door came Samuel Allen, to lift his little girl down from the horse, and after him trooped Samuel and Caleb, Chloe and Hannah, all glad to see their sister back again, and eager to hear her experiences.

"Well, daughter, did you have a nice time with your cousins?" said Mr. Allen. "I suppose there will be lots of talk now, when you tell your sisters all the news."

Mr. Allen was glad to meet Captain Rice, and said:

"If you have to wait for your grist, Captain, you and your boys had better ride back here and take dinner with us."

Captain Rice was glad to accept this invitation, for not until late afternoon was he able to get his grist and return to Deerfield village. During the waiting time, Captain Rice and Aaron found much to discuss with Mr. Allen, while Artemas had great fun playing Indian with the Allen and Amsden children, who took him down to an old wigwam still standing on the bank of a small brook running near the Allen house.

"This was the wigwam of old Kichkenechequah," said Caleb Allen. "She lived here a good while with her sick son. When he died, my father buried him up on that hill in the woods yonder."

"We call it 'Squaw Hill,'" said Eunice.

"Old Kichkenechequah used to keep all her blankets and best things up in our attic," said little Samuel.

"When she left," continued Caleb, "she dug up her son's bones, scraped and washed them clean, tied them up in a pack, and carried them away with her. And she has never come back."

"Father and mother were very kind to her and her sick son," said Eunice, "and they always thought she would come back some time to make a visit. But she never has."

Having a real Indian wigwam to play in lent much zest to the sport of playing Indian, and that night Artemas said to Tamar:

"You ought to have been there, Tamar. We had such fun. I wish we lived down at the Bars, so I could have Caleb and Samuel, and Simeon Amsden to play with all the time!"<sup>1</sup>

Early Tuesday morning the Rices set out for home, all feeling refreshed by the change and the meeting with friends. Mrs. Rice had done a little shopping at Captain Williams's store, improving the opportunity to purchase some needed articles not to be found in the woods of Boston Township No. 1.

The captain, anxious to raise his own pork, had purchased two pigs. These had to be driven the twenty-two miles to their new home, but being of the razor-back variety, their long legs and lank sides made them nimble and active, and they were quite equal to the trip, also giving Aaron and Artemas plenty of exercise along the way. Half the time the boys had to walk, shouting after and chasing the pigs, they being evidently firmly

<sup>1</sup> Appendix A.

resolved to go anywhere but in the path, whenever its narrow way afforded a chance to get out, one side or the other.

"These pigs have done everything except climb a tree," exclaimed the weary Aaron.

How, meantime, had Sylvanus fared in his lonely housekeeping? Busy at work, he did not realize his loneliness until he went home to dinner. His mother had left a pot of bean porridge hanging on the crane. He had only to rake open the banked-up fire, throw on some light wood, swing the crane over the blaze, and his dinner was ready. Bose had a big porringer of brown bread and hot bean porridge set down for his share. But Bose seemed to feel strange and lonely. He trotted about the house, pushing open the bedroom door, looking everywhere for his friends, then came and sat down close to Sylvanus, looking up in his face with a wistful whine.

"Yes, I know it, old fellow," said Sylvanus. "It's awful lonesome. I don't know what I should do if I hadn't you to talk to. You must stick by me, for you are the only friend I have."

Bose tagged faithfully at Sylvanus's heels all day, lying on the ground near by as Sylvanus hoed. Both he and his master were glad to

see the Taylors when the young woodsmen came home at night.

Monday morning Sylvanus thought:

"Before I go to work I'll run over and examine our turkey trap. We may have caught something."

Wild turkeys were plenty in the woods, as indeed was all game. The day before the Rices left home the boys had made a turkey trap out in the woods, a half mile or so beyond the house. They had dug a large hole in the ground and covered it with tree branches, digging a sloping path from outside down into the pit. Along this pathway they scattered grains of corn. As turkeys never look down except when feeding, once enticed into the pit, they would not be able to get out again.

"Now we shall see what we shall see," said Aaron, as the boys left the trap.

"I hope we shall see a flock of turkeys in there," said Sylvanus.

"I shall be satisfied with one good fat gobbler," said Aaron.

Sylvanus took his gun down from the buck horns, for without a gun it was not safe to go into the woods, and, closely followed by Bose, set off into the vast forest which pressed closely up around the little clearing on every side, tall,

dense, dark, mysterious — the silent abode of wild creatures innumerable.

Entering the woods, Bose suddenly showed signs of great excitement, and, springing past Sylvanus, disappeared in the thicket.

Sylvanus grasped his gun more tightly, scanning the dark depths of the woods closely. Now he heard loud barking from Bose, followed by yelps of pain.

"Some wild beast has hold of him," thought Sylvanus, running ahead.

Coming in sight of his turkey trap, he saw a big gobbler running wildly up and down in it. Another turkey lay dead near the pit's entrance, evidently killed by a large wolf, whom Bose had found stealing his master's game, and had promptly attacked.

The wolf was large, fierce and gaunt with hunger, and was proving too much for Bose, when his master appeared in the nick of time. Sylvanus fired at once, but in his excitement taking too hasty aim the ball only grazed the wolf's back, wounding him slightly.

The wolf released Bose, and sprang furiously at Sylvanus, clawing his bare feet and legs till they bled. Sylvanus fired again, this time killing the wolf.

Bose's right leg was badly torn and bleeding,

but he still managed to limp and hop around his foe, sniffing at the dead body lying prone on the ground.

"We will take his ears, Bose," said Sylvanus, drawing out his hunting knife, "for I may get a bounty for him. Thirty good shillings will not come amiss."<sup>1</sup>

Tuesday night, long after sundown, the tired party from Deerfield rode slowly along the river bank in the thickening dusk, glad to be so near their journey's end. Even the pigs were worn out and content to plod stupidly along, with occasional grunts which, no doubt, expressed their opinion of the foolishness of mankind, capable of undertaking such a jaunt and driving respectable pigs with them.

"There's the home light now, up on the hillside," said Aaron. "We're almost there."

"How cheerful it does look to see candle-light, after riding so long through the dark woods!" said Dinah.

"It shows that Sylvanus is alive, anyway," said his mother. "I wonder what the boy will have for us to eat."

"I'm hungry as a bear," said Artemas.

"So am I," said Tamar.

"We all are," said Dinah. "But don't

<sup>1</sup> Appendix B.

worry about supper, mother. I'll soon make a nice pot full of hasty pudding from this fresh ground meal we are bringing home."

As the travellers halted at the open door, where the firelight streamed invitingly out into the dark night, what delicious odor greeted their eager nostrils?

"Roast turkey!" shouted Artemas. "I smell turkey!"

And roast turkey it was. Sylvanus, who, with fire-flushed face, turned to greet them joyfully, and Bose, that limped about them, barking wildly, both led the way to the fire-place, where, before the blaze, twirled on a stout string the fat turkey gobbler, brown and crisp, done to a turn.

"Well done, boy! You are a credit to the family," said the captain.

"Bose seems to want us to understand that he had a hand in the business," said Aaron.

"He certainly did, — at least a paw," said Sylvanus.

Mrs. Rice and Dinah now took charge of the turkey and the supper, while Sylvanus, aided by Bose, whose interest in the newcomers proved altogether too lively, helped get the pigs into the stout new pen, well palisaded against wolves, prepared for them. The young pigs, being a

novelty, were great pets with the children, who fed them on the fat of the land, until the pigs, could they have expressed their thoughts, must have felt,

“We are indeed ‘pigs in clover.’”

## CHAPTER VIII.

### SOME VISITORS.

**T**HE Rices were all so busily at work that the summer passed quickly away, and autumn came before any one could believe it. Autumn brought a double share of work, in harvesting all crops, laying in stores, preparing in every way for the long siege of winter ahead. At last winter arrived.

One Sunday, when there was a little leisure from the round of incessant work, Mrs. Rice sat with her Bible on her lap at the front window, looking off across the snow-covered meadow and river to the high mountain peaks and ranges beyond, their crust glittering in the brilliant sunshine, their tall pines and hemlocks bowed down with a heavy weight of snow, the bare branches of the deciduous trees gleaming with ice. Not a moving object was anywhere to be seen. A white silence lay over the whole visible world.

"Listen to this, Sarah," said the captain, who sat before the fire, toasting his feet in

unwonted leisure, while he re-read the numbers of Poor Richard's Almanac, which his son Samuel had sent up to him by the last mail the Rices had received, when the boys rode down to Deerfield mill in the late autumn. The captain delighted in the shrewd worldly wisdom and sound practical common sense of Poor Richard, and often quoted his sayings. "Listen to this," said the captain. "You would think Poor Richard was looking out our front window."

He read aloud:

"The Hills, the Dales, and the delightful Woods,  
The flowery Plains and Silver-streaming Floods,  
By snow disguised, in bright Confusion lie,  
And with one dazzling Waste fatigue the eye."

"Truly it does 'fatigue the eye,'" said Mrs. Rice with a sigh.

"You are not homesick still, are you, Sarah?" asked the captain.

"No, but I cannot help dreading this long time of being shut in here by ourselves through the cold winter. It is foolish to borrow trouble, I know. But, if any of us fall sick up here, what shall we do?"

"Do the best we can," said the captain stoutly. "You have dried herbs enough hang-

ing from the loft rafters to cure a regiment. But we shall not be sick. We are all strong and healthy. My crops turned out unusually well, and we have, thank God, ample provision in store to carry us through the winter, with care.

‘Plough deep, while Sluggards sleep,  
And you shall have Corn to sell and to keep,’

says Poor Richard. And so it has proved with us. We shall weather the winter all right, and next summer, God willing, after such a good beginning this year, we shall get ahead much faster. The first year is much the hardest. Perhaps we can build our gristmill next year.”

“We certainly have been wonderfully favored, beyond what we could have expected,” said Mrs. Rice.

“Trust the future to God, Sarah, and do the best you can to-day. That is my motto,” said the captain.

Even in winter there was plenty of work for all. Whatever was used on the farm must be made at home. There were no stores to run to, and little money to spend. Mrs. Rice, aided by her girls, baked and brewed, spun and wove, made butter and cheese, sewed and knit, not only making all garments for the large family, but also weaving the cloth and spinning

the yarn used. The father and boys cared for the stock, hackled and swingled the flax, threshed the corn, shovelled snow, chopped down trees, and hauled great loads of wood on a rude sled of home manufacture from the surrounding forest, until the pile in the wood yard was nearly as high as the log cabin itself. Stormy days and evenings the men made and repaired tools and furniture.

The boys, during the evenings, made themselves a long sled, and sometimes took the girls on, coasting from the front door down the hill and far off across the meadow to the river's brink, shouts and merry laughter making the silent hills all around ring.

One day Mrs. Rice stood watching the children coast, smiling as she saw their sport. The captain said:

"Not much sickness there, eh, mother? The young folks don't look much as if they were in need of a doctor."

The rosy cheeks and bright eyes of the young folks, as they came running up on the crust for another slide down, certainly justified the captain's confidence.

The boys made snowshoes on which they and their father occasionally went hunting in the woods, bringing back game which was a

welcome change from salt meats and fish, and which helped eke out their store of provisions.

Sometimes came stormy days and nights, when the wind roared wildly through the naked woods, and the snow blew in clouds around the log cabin, threatening wholly to bury it from sight. Wolves were plenty, often howling around the house at night, a dreary sound that made Tamar snuggle up closer to Dinah, and often obliged the captain and Aaron to turn out of their warm beds and, guns in hand, go forth to barn and pens to make sure that all their animals were safe.

But now winter began to show signs of weakening its rigid hold. The days grew longer, the sun shone warmer and brighter, the long icicles glistening from the eaves dripped fast in the middle of the day, and the snow, which covered the ground for three or four feet on a level, began to shrink and settle. Spring was certainly coming, and every one felt hopeful and encouraged.

One March evening the Rices were all settled at their various occupations. Mrs. Rice was knitting heavy socks of blue yarn, Dinah was spinning at the wheel in the back of the room, her tall, lithe young form bending and swaying with unconscious grace as she plied the wheel

finger, and deftly twisted the long rolls into yarn. Tamar was at work with the little quill wheel, filling quills for her mother's use on the loom.

"Oh dear," said Tamar, "I wish quills would fill themselves. I'm tired of doing it."

"Perhaps you would like to pound samp for a change," said Artemas. "I would n't mind changing jobs."

Artemas was pounding corn into samp, in an "Indian mortar," that is, a section of a big tree trunk, hollowed out at one end, which stood near the huge fireplace ready for use. In this Artemas pounded the corn with a large wooden pestle. He had been at work for some time, and his arms were tired.

"Tut, tut," said the captain, who sat with Aaron one side the fire busy with carpenter work, shavings piling up around them as they sawed and whittled. The captain was making a noggin, Aaron fashioning axe helves, while Sylvanus was shelling corn. "Tut, tut, I don't like to hear any children of mine complaining of a little work. 'Diligence is the Mother of Good Luck,' Poor Richard truly says, and he says too, 'At the workingman's House Hunger looks in, but dare not enter.' Master Afraid-of-Work is apt to land in the almshouse."

The children were silent. But presently Artemas said:

"May I crack some butternuts, father, after I finish the samp?"

"Yes, we shall all enjoy some butternuts," said the captain.

Artemas now worked with more energy, and the samp was soon done, ready to boil for the morrow's dinner.

"I'm glad that's done," said Artemas, as he took a big wooden bowl and went out into the woodhouse for his nuts. Dinah stopped spinning, saying:

"I must see if my dough is rising too fast."

As she lifted the wooden cover from the great bowl standing near the fire, Artemas came scampering back from the woodhouse, banging the door behind him, looking frightened.

"I heard something coming on the crust," he said. "I did truly. Heavy footsteps."

Every one was a little startled, but the captain said:

"A moose probably. It's rather too early for bears to be out. Take your guns, boys, and we —"

"Hark!" exclaimed Mrs. Rice. "I plainly hear footsteps. Some one is coming."

All now heard footsteps drawing near. Bose,

barking furiously, ran to the door. The wooden latch rose, the door was pushed open, and three tall Indians entered the room! They were wrapped in blankets and bore heavy packs on their backs.

The family stared aghast at these unexpected and unwelcome guests. But the captain, quieting Bose, whom Sylvanus had to hold back by the collar, stepped forward, as the leader said:

“Netop, my brother. Metallak and his brothers go to Deerfield to sell their furs. They bring their white brother a present.”

So saying, Metallak deposited at the captain's feet a shoulder and flank of moose meat.

The captain was sufficiently versed in Indian etiquette to receive this gift graciously, saying:

“Metallak brings good gifts. He makes my heart glad. What do Metallak and his brothers want?”

“Metallak would lodge in his white brother's wigwam to-night,” said the tall Indian.

“You are welcome,” said the captain. “But first you must sup with us.”

Mrs. Rice was looking at her guests with ill-concealed dismay, while Tamar and Artemas had prudently retreated behind Dinah and

Aaron, watching the Indians from afar with wondering curiosity.

The captain took his wife one side, saying in low tone:

"We must let them stay, Sarah. You know I've often told you we were liable to have Indian visitors. It is most necessary to keep their good will in our isolated situation. And you must get them some food at once. That is the Indian custom among themselves, always to offer a guest food, no matter what time of day he arrive."

"Needs must when the devil drives, I suppose," said Mrs. Rice. "But it is an awful trial."

Aaron swung the iron pot over the fire, and Dinah put some of the moose meat on to boil. When done, the boys carried each of the Indians a large trencher full, with huge chunks of rye and Indian bread. The Indians, sitting cross-legged on the floor, ate hungrily.

The children watched them with mingled fear and interest. Their copper-colored faces, worn and weather-beaten, their long, oily black locks, their small keen eyes, glittering as they darted swift glances about, and their greedy manners as they grasped large handfuls of meat and crammed them down, all were a new experience to the children.

Bose, to whom Metallak had thrown a piece of meat, swallowed this peace offering nearly whole, and now lay, his head on his paws, but with eyes wide open, never removing them from the Indians, giving expression to his inmost feelings by an occasional low growl.

Artemas noticed with admiration the necklaces worn by the Indians; long strings of the teeth and claws of wild animals.

"I'll make me such a necklace as that," he thought, "and stick feathers in my hair. Then I can put a blanket over me and come and scare Tamar."

When the Indians at last finished eating, the captain made them a present of tobacco, which evidently pleased them.

"Whence comes Metallak?" asked the captain.

"From the winter hunt," said Metallak. "The old Indian trail lies over the Forbidden Mountain." Here he pointed towards Hoosac Mountain. "Often have the Indians travelled it, to trade with our white brother, Captain Williams at Deerfield. Never before have they found a white man's wigwam on their trail. But Metallak and the Englishman are brothers. The Englishman has shared his wigwam and his food with the Indian. The Indians' hearts

sing for joy. They say good words to their brother. The sun shines bright on the trail between their wigwams and his."

The captain duly expressed his desire for friendship in return.

Sylvanus had by signs induced one of the Indians to allow him to examine an arrow, from a quiverful hanging on the Indian's back.

"Him much good, heap good," said Sylvanus, nodding his head, and pointing at the arrow.

"The white boy can easily make arrows like Dayohogo's," said the Indian. "Dayohogo's arrow flies swift, like a bird, — hits the eagle on the wing."

Sylvanus examined the arrow closely, meaning to copy it. On the shaft a peculiar mark was cut, a sort of cross. Sylvanus pointed at it, looking inquiringly at Dayohogo.

"That is Dayohogo's mark," said the Indian. "Wherever the arrow flies, Dayohogo claims it, claims his own game."

Mrs. Rice meantime had drawn the captain into her bedroom for a whispered consultation.

"Where are these Indians going to sleep?" she asked.

"Oh, they'll simply camp down on the kitchen floor in their blankets," said the captain. "No trouble about that."

"Will it be safe for us, do you think?" asked Mrs. Rice.

"Certainly. They are perfectly peaceable. You can go to bed and sleep without a fear."

When Tamar and Dinah were safely up in their bedroom in the loft, Tamar said:

"I'm so glad the ladder comes up into the boys' bedroom, and not into ours. Let me get in the back of the bed, behind you, Dinah. I know I shall not sleep a wink to-night. I can see those Indians' sharp black eyes watching me every time I shut my own."

"Don't be such a little goose, Tamar," said Dinah. "We must get used to seeing Indians once in a while, living here in the wilderness as we do. Go to sleep and think no more about them."

When Dinah was almost asleep, Tamar whispered:

"Dinah, did you notice that Metallak's shirt and leggings were trimmed with long hair? It looked like people's hair."

"'Sh," said the sleepy Dinah.

Soon, in spite of her fears, Tamar's eyelids closed, and sleep reigned in the log cabin over red and white alike. In the morning, after a good breakfast of fried pork and johnny-cake, the Indians took the trail for Deerfield, making Mrs. Rice a parting gift of a small beaver skin.

"Well, I must say, if one is obliged to have Indians around, these were really quite decent," said Mrs. Rice. "They ate enormously. We shall soon see the bottom of the pork barrel if we are called on to entertain many of them. But they brought us some moose meat, and I can make you a nice warm cap, Moses, from this beaver skin."

## CHAPTER IX.

### FISHING AT SALMON FALLS.

THE last of April the Rice boys rode down to Deerfield to mill and for the mail. On their return, after delivering the precious mail which had accumulated in the Deerfield post office, and answering the women's eager inquiries about the news among their Deerfield friends, Aaron improved the first lull in the talk to say:

"Father, Jonathan thinks we shall make a great mistake if we don't go down to the Salmon Falls fishing next week."

"Is next week the time?" asked the captain.

"Yes, Jonathan says there will be a great run of fish then, bound up stream to their spawning beds. He says that Sergeant Hawks and his brother-in-law, Samuel Allen, and Hawks's two nephews, Gershom and Eleazer Hawks, and Oliver Amsden, and the Arms boys, the Nims boys, the Wellses, Timothy Childs, Aaron Denio, and I don't know how many more —"

"About all the men and boys in Deerfield, I should think," interjected Sylvanus.

"— are going up for the fishing the first of May. Can we go then too, father?"

"The spring planting will be right on by that time," said the captain. "If I let you boys off for a couple of days, you must work extra smart till then, to make up for lost time."

"We will, father," said the boys eagerly.

And they kept their word, working with the inspiration of the coming holiday ever before them. Evenings they were busy making scoop-nets and seines, for which Jonathan had given them directions.

May Day dawned bright and lovely, a heavenly day. After the long months of wintry cold and snow-covered ground, the soft, balmy air, fragrant with the odor of the new grass that made the meadows a tender green, the summery sky, in whose deep blue a few downy clouds floated above the mountain tops, the melody of the warblers already migrating north, that fluttered from tree to tree, made the earth seem a sort of enchanted fairyland.

The boys were full of happy excitement as they rode down the path, Aaron leading a third horse, laden with their baggage of nets,

luncheon, meal bags to bring home the fish, and two old blankets for the night.

"I wish I could go too," said little Artemas, who often had the feeling that all the good times would be over before he could grow up.

"I would n't mind going fishing myself to-day," said Dinah. "It is almost too pleasant to be working indoors."

"Anyway, I'm going to let Tumbler out," said Artemas. "I think he needs exercise."

He departed on this necessary errand, and it would be hard to say who enjoyed most the racing about and general "exercise" that followed, Artemas or Tumbler.

"After I get my work done, this afternoon, I mean to make a little flower bed south of the house, and sow those pink and poppy seeds Freedom French sent up to me by the boys," said Tamar.

"I'll help you dig up the ground," said Dinah.

In the afternoon the girls found working on the new flower bed an excellent excuse for being outdoors in the May sunshine, satisfying the soul's innate longing for the peace and beauty of nature.

Mrs. Rice too came out to watch the progress of the flower bed, making this an excuse for

loitering outdoors a few minutes. When her seeds were sown, Tamar asked:

"May I run up, just to the edge of the woods, mother, for a few violet roots to set in my flower bed? I saw some lovely ones up there the other day."

"Yes, but you must not go into the woods. Don't venture out of sight of the house, Tamar."

Tamar took an old knife and wooden bowl and skipped gayly away up hill towards the woods. Here she found not only blue and white violets in bloom, but spring beauties, bloodroot, and liverwort scattered about, the fair, delicate blossoms nodding lightly in the gentle breeze, shining out like stars from the green mossy turf where they grew. And, in the edge of the wood, the young ferns stood, their green spirals slowly uncoiling in the spring sunshine.

"Oh, you darlings!" cried Tamar, as she held a bunch of the wild flowers caressingly to her lips. They seemed instinct with life, as if conscious of her love.

When her bowl was full of plant roots, Tamar stopped a moment before going back home to look down on the lovely view below her. There was the log cabin in the foreground, and the tall, stately young buttonball before it,

stretching its boughs over it as if in protection, boughs where the new leaves were crowding off the brown seed balls; farther on were the green meadows, through which ran the Deer-field, full after the spring rains, its waters gleaming like silver in the sunlight, — Tamar could hear their rushing here on the hill top, — and beyond the picturesque mountains rose skyward, their trees covered with a mist of tender green leaf-buds half unfolded. The white birch trunks showed slender and white against the dark evergreens on the mountains.

“Oh, I’m glad I’m alive!” exclaimed Tamar, throwing back her calash to let the sunshine bask full upon her head.

At that moment she heard a sound, so slight as hardly to be noticeable, only the cracking of a twig. But Tamar well knew that no twig snaps itself. It was the footfall of man or wild beast. She started running, afraid to glance behind, yet impelled to look by her very terror.

Striding along after her among the tree trunks she saw a file of Indians. Tamar now ran faster than before, if possible, but the Indians overtook her before she could reach the house. She was relieved to see that the leader was Metallak.

"Little squaw, fear not," said Metallak as he passed. "Metallak and his brothers go to the falls of the Pocumtuck fishing. No harm silly little squaw."

Though this speech was not complimentary, it reassured Tamar, and she slackened her pace, watching the Indians as they strode on past the house, not stopping.

"I was so frightened!" said Tamar, as she reached the house, where her mother stood in the door, anxiously watching her, having seen the Indians pass. "I wish we did n't live where Indians come. Just as I was feeling perfectly happy, out popped those Indians upon me!"

"It is one of our crosses," said Mrs. Rice. "I suppose we shall get used to them after a while."

When the solitary trail, followed by Aaron and Sylvanus, came out of the woods near the falls, they found the usually lonely spot transformed into a scene of much animation. Many saddle-horses were tied to the trees round about, baggage of various sorts littered the ground, and thirty or more men and boys were running back and forth, some already busy fishing, some unloading and tying their horses, some just riding in from the south.

The talking and laughing, the sound of so many cheerful voices, were exciting to the Rice boys, coming as they did from such a secluded life.

"Halloo, Aaron, Sylvanus!" shouted Jonathan Hoyt. "Glad to see you. You're just on time. The salmon are jumping lively, and as for shad you could n't thrust a stick into the water without hitting a few."

"Halloo, boys!" shouted Oliver Amsden. "I just scooped up a salmon that will weigh thirty pounds, or I am no judge."

"Don't brag so loud, Oliver," said David Wells. "You're not the only fisherman here. Other folks are hauling in a few fish too."

Aaron and Sylvanus hurried to fasten their horses and get out their nets, excited at the animated scene.

Sergt. John Hawks, Timothy Childs, John Catlin, and Aaron Denio seemed to be the leaders among the men. Denio was full of jokes; and loud laughter often rang out from the section where he was hauling his nets, below the falls.

He had just drawn in a big net full of shining, struggling fish, writhing and tumbling about in vain efforts to escape the ruthless meshes that held them fast. Denio threw the flopping salmon high up on the bank, but the shad he

tossed contemptuously back into the river, saying:

"Pork's plenty at my house. We have n't come to eating shad yet."

"Are you going to throw away the shad we catch, Aaron?" asked Sylvanus.

"I don't know. Wait and see how we come out. If we catch plenty of salmon, I shall. But, if we don't, we may as well fill up our bags with shad. I want mother should have her barrel full of salt fish."

Not very long after the arrival of the Rice boys, Metallak and his band appeared.

"There come the Indians," said William Arms. "They are always sure to be on hand for their share of the salmon."

The Deerfield men knew these Indians, and friendly greetings were exchanged. Soon red men and white were fishing amicably together, some hauling seines in the still water below the falls, some catching fish in scoop-nets.

At noon the scene was picnic-like. Fires were built, and fish broiling on the ends of sharp sticks filled the air with an appetizing odor to men and boys who had eaten nothing since their early breakfast in the dawning, and had been engaged in active work outdoors ever since.

They sat about in little groups on logs or the ground, opening their lunch bags, exchanging drinks from the earthen bottles of root beer brewed by their thrifty wives, or from bottles which, perhaps, contained a stronger beverage. News was told, stories and jokes circulated, and after luncheon games were played, and trials of skill made. As the boys watched Matthew Clesson make a long standing jump, which called out loud applause, Sylvanus said:

"That is n't much. My sister Dinah can beat that. She can jump twice her own length."

"I don't believe it," said Jonathan.

"I'll get her to do it some time for you," said Sylvanus.

The boys were in a group by themselves, talking as they ate with infinite relish their dry luncheons and the broiled salmon. Now that so many of the fishermen had left the falls, the salmon were leaping up them. It was a beautiful sight to see a great fish rise in the air, its wet scales sparkling in the sun, soaring up and splashing into the water above the great rocks that made the falls.

"Ha, did you see that one, boys?" asked William Arms. "He barely made it; just caught on by his tail, you might say. I never saw anything better done."

"Watch Metallak and the other Indians," said Oliver Amsden. "The Indians can certainly beat us at that trick."

The Indians, armed with long spears, stood on the shore, and with a sure aim, born of much practice, speared many a salmon drawing near the falls for its upward leap.

"For my part, I don't think the Indians have any right to come here fishing with white folks," said Eleazer Wells. "No one wants them here, and they ought to know it."

"You'd best tell Metallak that," said David Wells. "He thinks the English have no business coming here to fish at the Indians' fishing place. He says the Great Spirit gave this fishing place to the red men long before the foot of white man ever trod here."

"Pooh, that will do for Indian talk," said Eleazer.

"Before very long," said Aaron, "some one will buy this land. Settlers are not likely to overlook this fertile valley, with such a natural water power as this. Gristmills and sawmills will be built here, and where will our fishing be then, to say nothing about the Indians'?"

"The General Court has taken time by the forelock in that matter," said Jonathan. "Only last March they ordered that the Salmon Fish-

ing Falls in Deerfield River be reserved for the use of the public, with twenty acres around them for the conveniency of fishing."

"I am glad to hear that," said Aaron.

"Talk about the Indians' skill in spearing salmon, they can't surpass Aaron Denio. He's equal to any of them," said Eleazer.

"Aaron's half French and half Indian, I might say," said Oliver. "At least he lived with the Indians most of his childhood. His father was a Frenchman from Canada who happened to be living in Deerfield, and had just married Abigail Stebbins when the town was captured in 1704. Aaron was born in Canada. When he was about ten years old a band of Indians brought him with them to Deerfield to visit his grandfather, John Stebbins. When it was time for the Indians to go home, they could not find Aaron. He and his grandfather liked each other, and Aaron had hid, no doubt with his grandfather's connivance, determined not to return to Canada. So Aaron grew up in Deerfield, and inherited most of his grandfather's property. He is living at Green River now. But he has never forgotten his Indian training."

When night came the tired fishers camped on the ground, wrapping themselves up in

blankets. Some, like the Indians, cut spruce and hemlock boughs to pile up for soft, fragrant couches. A camp-fire was kept blazing as a protection against wild beasts, though every man slept with his gun close to his hand. Lulled by the rushing sound of the water, all were soon fast asleep.

The silent stars came out in the dark sky above, the mountains loomed around, grand, dark, imposing, like mighty sentinels, and the river flowed swiftly by. A deer, attracted by the firelight, drew near, peeping through the bushes at the strange light. But as Aaron Denio rose to throw more logs on the fire, the deer, warned by some subtle instinct that this object, moving darkly between her and the fire, boded her no good, turned and bounded swiftly away.

The next day, at noon, while all were either eating or engaged in games and trials of strength and skill in jumping, wrestling, etc., a strange Indian was seen coming towards the camp from the northeastern woods. He returned the greeting of Sergeant Hawks, who recognized him, with a surly nod, and, going directly to Metallak, drew him one side for a private conference. The two Indians were seen talking earnestly for a few minutes, the strange Indian

occasionally emphasizing his words with a strong gesture. Having delivered his message, whatever it was, he turned to depart as he had come.

"Will not Massaquan stop and eat?" asked Sergeant Hawks.

The Indian glowered at Hawks, only saying, as he passed on:

"Massaquan cannot tarry to eat the white man's bread to-day."

Metallak immediately gathered the other Indians around him, and, after a short conference, all went to work packing up their fish, and, bearing the heavily loaded sacks on their shoulders, strode away westward as if in haste, with no words of farewell or explanation of this strange conduct.

"What mean these actions on the part of the Indians?" asked Timothy Childs.

"It seems unfriendly," said Sergeant Hawks. "Yet I know no cause for ill feeling between them and us. They have had their fair share of the fishing."

"Perhaps that strange Indian brought some tidings that bode no good to us whites," said Samuel Allen.

"He is one Massaquan, chief of the Scatacooks, who has been a regularly commissioned

captain in our government's pay at Fort Dummer for the last ten years," said Hawks. "I've met him there more than once, and he has always been most helpful to the government in dealings with the Indians. That makes his conduct seem the more strange."

"Well, I don't understand it," said Allen, "but I predict that it means trouble."

"It cannot be that France has declared war against England," said Hawks, "for in that case how should the French and Indians know it when as yet no word has come from Boston to us?"

"We shall know it soon enough, to our sorrow," said John Catlin, "if war is declared;" and all agreed with him.

Many of the men had now taken all the fish they could carry, though some, like Aaron, had led an extra horse to help with their loads. These fish were all intended to be salted down for home use. It hardly paid to catch them for selling, the market price for shad at that time being a penny apiece, while salmon in Northampton brought but one penny a pound, and still less in Deerfield.

A sturdy old character whom every one called "Uncle Josh" excited much merriment by the ingenious plan he devised for carrying home his

share of the fish, after filling all the bags he had brought. He deliberately took off his leathern breeches, tied up the legs at the bottom, and filled them with fish, throwing them across his saddle, mounting and riding off for Deerfield amid the loud laughter of the company, and shouts of

“You’d better ride slowly, Uncle Josh. You’ll scratch your legs going through the bramble bushes if you’re not careful.”

Little cared Uncle Josh for the witticisms freely lavished on him, if only he could take home a generous stock of fish to confound his wife, who was somewhat of a shrew, and had remarked when he left home:

“Pretty business for a man of your age, dawdling off up to Deerfield Northwest<sup>1</sup> fishing! Great fishing it will be, I guess! A good deal more drinking, and idling, and getting away from work that needs doing at home, than fishing!”

Aaron and Sylvanus, for their part, were well pleased with the result of their trip. All their bags were full, mostly of salmon, with a few shad only, to help fill up the last bag. Jonathan had given them a newspaper for their father, which the postrider from Boston had

<sup>1</sup> The old name for Shelburne.

brought into Deerfield only two days previous. The boys had immensely enjoyed the fun and excitement, the lively sayings and doings of the crowd, with a zest only possible to those who live in solitary places.

"Father will be glad enough to get this late paper that brother Sam has sent him," said Sylvanus, as the boys rode alone along the western path homeward, turning their backs on the jovial company all bound east for Deerfield.

"And he and mother too will be pleased with this store of fish we are taking home," said Aaron.

"They will be sure to want us to go again next year," said Sylvanus.

"I hope so," said Aaron.

## CHAPTER X.

### EXCITING RUMORS.

THE boys were joyfully welcomed home when they arrived in the dusk of early evening. The place had been lonely indeed without the two bright young fellows, bringing with them wherever they went the breezy atmosphere of youth and health and hope. Bose ran wildly back and forth from one to the other, barking loudly and jumping up on his friends to testify his joy at seeing them again.

“Down, Bose!” said Sylvanus; “you need n’t knock a fellow over because you’re glad to see him.”

“I feel as glad to see you back as Bose does,” said Dinah.

“Don’t you jump on me, Dinah, or I shall fare hard,” said Sylvanus; whereat all laughed, and tall, strong Dinah, seizing her younger brother by the shoulders, whirled him around and around, “just to let you see, young man, that you cannot be saucy to me,” she said.

“Well, boys, I must say you have done

well," said the captain, when he saw the load of fish.

All were eager to know what news the boys had brought back. When Aaron mentioned the arrival of the strange Indian in camp, and the sudden departure of Metallak and his band, the captain looked anxious.

"I hope that does not forebode another war," he said. "But I well know that the French will never rest easy until either they have driven us off this continent, or we have whipped them soundly. Trouble between us is bound to come, sooner or later."

When the chores were done, the captain threw some light, dry pine on the fire, and sat down on the settle, eager to read by the blaze the *Boston News Letter* which the boys had brought him.

Presently he said:

"Here is something that seems to point towards war. A 'Letter from a Well Informed Gentleman in London, England, on the Prospects of War,' written the last of January, so it is late news. The writer predicts that France is likely to take advantage of the troubles with Spain, about the Austrian succession, to attack England. France thinks she can take us at a disadvantage, he says."

"I pray we may not have another war," said Mrs. Rice.

"So do I, with all my heart," said the captain; "but I agree with the Deerfield men that the actions of the Indians look ominous. I had a glimpse of Metallak and his band filing past, and wondered that they did not stop."

"If war is declared, father, I want to enlist," said Aaron.

"If war is declared between France and England, you will be needed right here at home, probably," said the captain. "But I cannot yet believe that we are to have another war. I noticed in Poor Richard's Almanac the verse for last November was most hopeful in its view of the outlook."

The captain took down the almanac from the peg under the mantelpiece where it hung, ready for instant consultation on the weather and other important matters, and read aloud this verse:

"A Year of wonder now behold!

*Britons* despising *Gallic* Gold!

A Year that stops the *Spanish* Plunders!

A Year that they must be Refunders!

A Year that sets our Troops a marching!

A Year secures our Ships from Searching!

A Year that Charity's extended!

A Year that Whig and Tory's blended!

Amazing Year! That we're defended!"

At the end he said:

“We will not borrow trouble, but trust in God that all these forebodings are groundless. But now it is time for our prayers and to bed.

‘Early to bed, and early to rise,  
Makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise,’

as Poor Richard truly says.”

The captain read a psalm of trust, and then all stood with bowed heads, while the captain, his hands clasped, the firelight shining on his uplifted face, earnestly besought the God of his fathers to care for him and his through the night and in all the unknown dangers and trials that might await them:

“Sanctify to us all orderings of thy providence, O Lord. May all work out thy salvation. To thee we leave the future. We ask now and always thy blessing and guidance, knowing that thou carest for us far beyond our poor deserts. We ask all in the name of thy well-beloved Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.”

All went to bed that night comforted and strengthened by this prayer of real faith.

The spring work went briskly on in the days that followed. One afternoon, as the captain and his sons were busy in the meadow, they saw two horsemen riding up the trail from the east.

"The Taylors, I declare!" exclaimed the captain. "I have wondered they were not here at work on their land before this."

The Taylors were given hearty welcome, and then came what was always the first question, "What is the news?" The Rices had heard nothing from the outside world since the boys returned from the fishing.

"News enough, and bad enough too," said Othniel Taylor. "The postrider brought word from Boston last night that, on the 13th of this month, the French governor at Cape Breton had attacked Canso, our fishing post in Nova Scotia, captured it, destroying the fishery and the fort, burning all the buildings, and carrying off the eighty men in its garrison prisoners to Louisburg. Governor Shirley, on receiving word of this disaster, sent reinforcements to Annapolis just in time to save that place from the same fate."

"Has France declared war against us then?" asked the captain.

"No word has come to that effect yet from Boston. But we at Deerfield have had word from Canada by way of Albany that such is the case, and our selectmen have called a meeting for to-morrow night to take prompt measures for defence."

"Too bad, too bad," said the captain sadly. "I have hoped, against hope, that war would not come, in spite of the ominous actions of the Indians at the Fishing Falls."

"France had, no doubt, craftily sent word of her intentions over to her colony before she openly declared war, meaning thus to take us unawares and unprepared. John Catlin, who came in yesterday from a scout up Fort Dummer way, says that every man of the six Indian chiefs that have been employed there by our government for years, regularly commissioned officers, who have seemed so friendly, have left, disappearing without a word. They probably have had secret word from Canada of the coming war."

"No Indian can resist the chance for plunder and pillage offered by war," said the captain. "If there is war, these friendly Indians who have been in and out among us, and know all our weak places, will be our worst foes."

"True enough," said Taylor. "Jonathan and I rode out to-day to stack up our timber, and put our clearing in as good shape as possible to leave, for of course, now war is declared, we shall not think of building or moving out from Deerfield. Martha shudders at the idea of venturing out here to live, with another French

and Indian war upon us. We thought, too, we had best ride up to give you warning."

"You're pretty well exposed out here, Captain," said Jonathan Taylor. "Twenty-two miles between you and any settlement. For the high mountains between you and Fort Morrison in Colerain make it impossible for you to take refuge there in case of trouble."

"I know it; I know it well," said the captain gravely.

The Taylors spent the night at the Rices'. All the talk in the evening was of the coming war. When they were alone that night, Mrs. Rice asked her husband:

"Do you not feel, Moses, that it may be best for us to abandon this exposed place, and move back into some of the older settlements while the war lasts?"

"It is a terribly hard question to decide, Sarah," said the captain. "It would mean great loss to me, as you know, to abandon this place, and the fruits of two years' hard labor. I don't want to do it until I must. We will wait a little and see. I will try to do what seems best."

A few days later the captain said:

"Sarah, I am going to ride down to Deerfield to-morrow. I have errands to do, and I

cannot rest easy until I know the latest news about the war. So, if you want to write to Samuel, get the letter ready to-day, for I shall make an early start to-morrow morning."

The captain's return was anxiously awaited, and when he was seen riding up the path late the second day after his departure, all went out to meet and greet him.

"Well, Sarah," said the captain, as he dismounted, "I bring plenty of news this time, bad news, but good too, I hope."

"Is war declared, father?" asked Sylvanus.

"Yes, it seems France declared war against England March 15, and England, on her part, declared war March 29. But the tidings only reached Boston May 20 or 22. Of course, after the capture of Canso, no one was greatly surprised."

"What are they doing in Deerfield?" asked Aaron.

"They have voted to build a mount at Green River, and four mounts in the village. But the good news for us, Sarah, is this. Capt. Elijah Williams told me there is no doubt the government will order a line of forts built to the north of us, to protect the northwest border of the province. He said he had much talk about this plan, when lately in Boston, with

prominent men there, and all were agreed that, in case of war, such a line of forts would be a prime necessity."

"That is good news indeed," said Mrs. Rice, in a tone of relief. "Forts to the north would be a great protection to us."

"Captain Williams says the government looks at it in this way. The forts at Fort Dummer and No. 4 check the Indians from coming down the Connecticut River as of old. They are, therefore, now liable, in coming from Crown Point, to cross over the Hoosacs, in order to reach the Deerfield. The point is, to block their way along Cold River and the other tributaries of the Deerfield."

"How soon will these forts be built?" asked Mrs. Rice.

"This coming summer probably. Captain Williams said the government would act promptly, he thought. I confess this news has lifted a heavy load from my heart. Apparently we can now stay here with perfect safety. At all events I shall risk it."

"I too feel greatly relieved," said Mrs. Rice. "Only it seems almost too good to be true. I fear I shall not quite believe it until I see work actually begun on the line of forts."

The following Friday, Mrs. Rice announced

her intention of making soft soap the next day.

"Here it is the 7th of June, and I have n't made my soap yet," she said. "It's the new of the moon. My mother always made her soap then. I'll get at it to-morrow, without fail. It is a hard job, but it has to be done some time, and, once done, that's the end of it for a year. We must all go to bed early to-night, for I intend to get at work betimes to-morrow."

The morrow's sun rose on a glorious June day. The trees were in the full freshness of their new foliage, the tall grass blossoms waved in the mowing as the breeze blew over the meadow, and all the mountain-sides were abloom with pink mountain laurel. In the woods near the Rices' the wild grapevines, which grew luxuriantly, throwing themselves from tree to tree, were now in blossom, their delicate, delicious fragrance filling the air.

Tamar stood in the open door, inhaling long breaths of the sweet morning air.

"How I do love the smell of wild grape blossoms!" she said. "I am really glad you are going to make soap to-day, mother, it's such a lovely day to be outdoors."

"Well, fly round, fly round, child, and don't be idling," said the busy mother, full of her

work. "There's plenty for every one to do to-day."

In the yard, at a safe distance from the house, Aaron built a big fire of logs, which blazed up merrily. Each side the fire he drove strong forked sticks, laying across them a stout round stick, on which he hung a large iron kettle holding at least six pailfuls, in which the soap was to be made, and another smaller kettle for the grease.

Sylvanus brought up the soap grease from the cellar, and lye from the ash leach in the woodhouse.

"Have you tested that lye, Sylvanus?" asked his mother.

"Yes. It's all right. It bears up an egg," said Sylvanus.

Dinah and Tamar were flying about, doing the bidding of their mother, who, an old green calash on her head, and a long stick in her hand, bending over the caldron in the smoke stirring her soap, looked like the queen of a gypsy camp.

As for Artemas and Bose, they too "helped." Artemas played this was a council fire. He was an Indian chief, and Bose was his enemy. He lit blazing war-torches of pine, and chased the barking Bose, the dog enjoying the sport as

much as Artemas, around and around the fire, until at last his long-suffering mother exclaimed:

“Artemas, drop those firebrands. You will set yourself or some one else on fire. And I cannot stand such a racket.”

The traditional many hands making light work, all progressed finely, and, by afternoon, the soap barrel was nearly full of clear, jelly-like brown soap, and the last kettleful was boiling over the fire.

“If this lot comes all right, we shall be through,” said Mrs. Rice, in a tone of great satisfaction. “And a good job done it is. I always feel rich when I have a nice barrel of new soap in the cellar. Run and get me a little porringer, Tamar. I will try this lot now, to see if it is coming.”

“Halloo,” cried Artemas. “Look! Look! Some one is coming. Some of the Deerfield men. That is Abner’s father that leads them.”

All looked with interest at a file of men approaching, recognizing familiar faces as they came still nearer. Following Sergeant Hawks were Thomas Nims and his cousin, Elisha Nims, David Hoyt and his brother Jonathan, Ebenezer Arms, Matthew Clesson, and young David Wells.

The Rice boys greeted with delight their

friends Jonathan and David, while Captain Rice made haste to welcome his guests and ask their errand.

"We are out on a scout to Hoosac Mountain," said Sergeant Hawks. "Capt. Elijah Williams, who is to have charge of all scouting parties sent out, came home from Boston Wednesday, where he had been to consult with Governor Shirley about the best means of defence. The governor thinks it important to keep scouting parties out much of the time, ranging the woods to the north and west, that the French and Indians may not come upon us unawares."

"He is right. It is a wise plan," said the captain.

"As you know, one of the Indians' chief trails is over the Hoosacs and down Cold River to the Deerfield," said Hawks. "So Captain Williams has sent us out to search through this region for signs of the enemy. Is it asking too much of you to suffer us to rest here to-night?"

"We will keep you gladly," said the captain.

Mrs. Rice and the girls, after their hard day's work, might well have felt dismayed at this unexpected addition to their toils. But not so.

"Never mind the soap, Dinah," said her mother, as Dinah was about swinging the kettle

of soap, which had "come," from the fire. "Aaron will attend to that. We must get up a good supper as quickly as possible. Artemas, bring in some chips. Tamar, stir up the kitchen fire, and make a big pot of hasty pudding. Dinah, you can beat up some biscuit. Put the bake-oven heating before the fire and the frying pan on the coals. I will cook the venison."

Luckily there was plenty of fresh meat in the house, for Aaron had shot a deer the previous day, a venturesome deer that had stolen into the corn patch in the early morning to "damnify the corn" by nibbling the tender shoots just pricking through the rich soil. But Aaron was also up in the early dawn, and a ringing shot from the hillside had ended the deer's career, and given the Rices plenty of venison.

All the tables the house boasted were put together, making one long one. The hungry guests did not care if no tablecloth covered the rough slabs, as they took stools and drew up to a smoking hot supper with plenty of home-brewed beer to drink.

Supper over, the men sat outdoors under the buttonball tree, smoking and talking.

"Do you hear anything about the building of the forts?" asked Captain Rice.

“Work is to begin on them soon, this summer without fail,” said Sergeant Hawks.

“Thomas French tells me that Col. John Stoddard is to have command of the forts and of our whole northwestern border,” said Ebenezer Arms.

“Yes, that is so,” said Hawks.

“There could not be a better man chosen for the place,” said Captain Rice heartily. “Colonel Stoddard is a man of pluck and sense, and has had plenty of experience in fighting Indians.”

The boys lay out around the fire built for making soap, which still blazed fitfully, pleasant to see, if it did attract many midges from the woods around.

“I envy you boys your chance to go out scouting,” said Aaron. “If father would consent, I would go with you in a minute.”

“As soon as I am sixteen,” said Sylvanus, “I mean to go out.”

“When will you be back here?” asked Aaron.

“Sergeant Hawks told me, when I was walking behind him to-day,” said Elisha Nims, “that, if he found no traces of Indians in this section, he should strike across the hills for North River, and follow that stream down to the Deerfield, and so home.”

"In that case, we shall not see you again," said Aaron.

"Not this time," said Elisha. "But, if this war grows serious, you may see more of us than you wish."

The scouts camped for the night on the floor of the Rices' living-room. Mrs. Rice was fortunately able to supply pillows for all, pillows filled with pigeon feathers which she had made the previous fall, when her sons had shot many pigeons from the immense number that had roosted in the woods near by in such masses as to break some limbs off the trees. The captain and his sons spread thick bear-skins on the floor for beds, and the scouts found themselves very comfortable under the shelter of this friendly roof.

As Sergeant Hawks stretched himself out on his bearskin, he said:

"Better make the most of this, boys. I cannot promise you such luxurious accommodations out in the woods to-morrow night."

"We will have to take it as it comes," said Matthew Clesson.

## CHAPTER XI.

### A NEW UNDERTAKING.

THE scouts were up with the gray of early dawn the next morning. In vain did Sergeant Hawks try to press upon Captain Rice pay for his hospitality.

"We of Deerfield will, most likely, be coming this way often," said Hawks, "and you cannot afford to entertain us without charge. We shall eat you out of house and home."

"If the war continues, I may have to charge something for entertaining soldiers," said the captain, "but not now. It's worth vastly more than the cost to me to know that the border is being vigilantly guarded."

"Don't speak of paying a penny," said Mrs. Rice.

With many hearty thanks on the part of the scouts, and warm wishes for their safe return from the Rices, the file of men walked off up the old Indian trail to the west, following the course of the Deerfield.

Late in the afternoon of the following Thurs-

day another scouting party from Deerfield, led by Lieut. John Catlin, appeared at Captain Rice's. From them the Rices learned that Sergeant Hawks's party had struck the trail of forty Indians on the west branch of North River, and that many other traces of Indians had been seen near the settlements.

Finding that Lieutenant Catlin was short of men, as so many scouting parties were now out from Deerfield in different directions, Captain Rice, much to Aaron's joy and the envy of Sylvanus, allowed Aaron to go out with him.

The scouts returned to the Rices' in the middle of the night. The leg-weary Aaron fell on the bed beside Sylvanus, without stopping to undress, and was soon fast asleep.

"Aaron, Aaron," said Sylvanus, waking and finding his brother beside him, "how far did you go? What happened? Did you see any Indians? Speak, can't you?" And Sylvanus tried to shake his big brother.

A weary groan was Aaron's only response, as he settled himself to sleep more heavily. But the next morning he was more communicative.

"Scouting is n't all sport, Sylvanus," he said. "It's pretty tough work, and so you will find when your turn comes. But I'm not sorry I went. And I'll go again."

Up the Deerfield, some miles above the Rices', this party had found a fire burning, and Indian coats drying near by, and had prudently withdrawn, being so few in number.

A month passed after Aaron's first experience in scouting, a month full of anxiety to the Rices, who lived constantly on guard against possible sudden attack by Indians.

One morning Tamar, who was at work in her flower bed, ran into the house, saying excitedly:

"I see four men coming, mother!"

"Not Indians?" asked Mrs. Rice.

"No, but I don't know them, and they come from up the river, not from Deerfield way."

"That is most strange," said Mrs. Rice.

She advanced to the door, where the young man, who seemed to be the leader of the party, a man of fine presence and bearing, after courteous greeting, said:

"I must introduce myself as Timothy Dwight of Northampton, Mrs. Rice. With my assistants, I have been sent out into these parts by Colonel Stoddard to run a line across the country for the forts which it is proposed to build here. It is a wild tract of country, among woods and mountains, and we have been obliged

to live a rough life, as I fear our appearance but too plainly denotes. The sight of a roof, and of smoke rising from a civilized chimney, was most grateful to us, I assure you. We would gladly rest awhile, and dine here, as the provision taken with us, though eked out by hunting, is nearly gone."

"You are heartily welcome," said Mrs. Rice cordially. "Sit down while we prepare dinner. My husband will soon be in."

Mrs. Rice said to Dinah, as the two made ready the dinner:

"I am so thankful work is going to begin on the forts, that I do not object to a little extra work. Our situation, the only house on the river west of Deerfield, obliges us to keep tavern, whether we wish it or not. These men look completely fagged, and a nice hot dinner will rest them."

At the dinner table the captain asked details of Colonel Dwight's work.

"Did you run the line for the forts on Hazen's Line?" he asked.

"No, a few miles south, in order to keep within that line, and avoid further trouble, such as our province has had in the past," said Colonel Dwight. "I started at Morrison's Fort in Colerain, and ran the line over the outlying

range of the Hoosacs, through the great hills north and west of you; a difficult undertaking, almost an impossible one. But now 't is done, and I have my plat with me."

Here Colonel Dwight showed his plat of the region surveyed.

"That pricked line indicates where the forts should be, in my judgment," said Colonel Dwight.

Captain Rice and his family examined the plat with keen interest. A wholly wild and unsettled tract of country was here represented, marked by mountains and streams, some of them known to the Rice men in hunting expeditions, many unfamiliar.

On Captain Rice's last trip to Deerfield he had brought home a letter containing most important news for him and his. It was from Mrs. Rice's brother in Sudbury, Titus King, announcing that he had decided to try his fortunes in the new country, and wished to come out to his brother-in-law's new settlement.

"I shall be delighted to have Titus here with us," said Mrs. Rice.

"Titus is a young man after my own heart," said Captain Rice. "Not afraid of work. As Poor Richard says, he 'handles his tools without mittens.' It will be worth everything to

me to have his help. There is plenty of work here for ten men, if I had them, to develop this new land and bring it under cultivation."

Not long after Colonel Dwight's call, Titus appeared, riding up the Deerfield path, with his luggage strapped on his horse. He was joyfully welcomed. The young people were delighted at this advent of their stalwart young uncle, not yet too old to have forgotten how to frolic, and all were glad of another helper and defender.

The first greetings over, Captain Rice asked:

"Did you pick up any tidings in Deerfield about the war, Titus, as you came through?"

"I stopped at David Hoyt's tavern over night," said Titus, "and there I was right in the centre of things, for Capt. Elijah Williams's store, the headquarters of the scouts, is close by, and his cousin, Capt. William Williams, lives near, just across the training field."

Lieutenant Hoyt had recently bought the Sheldon house<sup>1</sup> for his son David, who had married the daughter of Ebenezer Sheldon, its owner, and here David now kept tavern.

"The great news is," continued Titus, "that Colonel Stoddard has ordered Capt. William

<sup>1</sup> Known as "the old Indian House."

Williams to proceed at once to work on the first fort to be built up in these hills. His orders are to erect it about five and a half miles west of Morrison's Fort in Colerain, on a line lately surveyed by Col. Timothy Dwight of Northampton."

"Yes, we know all about it. We saw Colonel Dwight's plat. He was here last week," said Mrs. Rice.

"I heard Captain Williams read Colonel Stoddard's letter at the store last night," said Titus. "More than that, Captain Williams is directed by Stoddard to search out convenient places for two or three more forts, to be erected about five and a half miles apart, along the line pricked out to the west on Colonel Dwight's plat."

"That will bring a fort in not far from us, I should judge," said Captain Rice.

"Captain Williams thinks so. He said the chances were that you might be called on to help build the fort placed nearest you. He wished me to speak to you about it."

"I will certainly do my best to help the forts along," said the captain. "It is fortunate we have you to reinforce us, Titus. How soon does Captain Williams begin work?"

"Right away. He set off from Deerfield

this morning for Colerain, with the soldiers from the east, who are under his command. I rode up in their escort until their path turned off to the north."

The Rices, aided by Titus, found time to build a palisade around house and barn. Every night the stock were driven within this rude stockade, and the gates fastened.

"I don't feel as if Indians were peering into the windows every dark night now," said Tamar, when the new stockade was done.

Dinah laughed, but admitted:

"I confess I feel safer myself. Indians now certainly cannot steal close up to the house before we know they are about."

The summer passed quickly away, on the whole a happy and prosperous season. There was plenty of hard work, but every one had been well, the crops were good, and above all, no Indians had appeared.

One day in early November, Aaron and his father were working between the large brooks which poured down from the northern hills through Captain Rice's land into the Deerfield, "Mill Brook," as Aaron had named one (for here he hoped some time to have a mill of their own), and Rice's Brook.

Their attention was attracted by a rustling

among the dead leaves up the brook, in the northern woods.

"Something's coming," said the captain, as both seized their guns and stood looking sharply in the direction of the sound.

Soon they were relieved to see coming down the hill, through the defiles of the tree trunks, six soldiers. Captain Rice recognized the leader, a man of commanding appearance, as Capt. William Williams, having met him at Deerfield.

"Why, Captain Williams," he cried, "did you drop from the clouds? Where do you hail from?"

"From Fort Shirley, our new fort, just completed and named for his Excellency the governor," said Captain Williams. "I am out to decide on the situation of the next fort to be built to the west of Fort Shirley, which Colonel Stoddard has ordered to be erected as speedily as may be. I have come partly to ask your aid, Captain Rice."

"But how did you find your way here through the pathless wilderness?" asked the captain.

"I had Colonel Dwight's plat, which gave me some idea of the general lay of the land. And, as it will be necessary to have a path from the new fort to your place, it seemed best to take this time to survey and blaze such a path

through the forest. I thought this stream must bring me out near your house, and am pleased to find that I was correct."

Captain Rice admired the indomitable resolution which had enabled Captain Williams to make his way over high mountains and through a pathless wilderness to his home, and gave him and his soldiers hospitable entertainment.

Dinner over, Captain Williams broached his business. Colonel Stoddard had directed that Captain Rice, living comparatively near the site of the proposed fort on the hills north of him, be asked to cut the timber needed and proceed to build the fort.

It was far from an easy undertaking, owing to the difficulty of reaching the spot. In truth, it would have seemed impossible to any one less ruggedly determined than Captain Rice. However, he had not come into this wilderness expecting to be

". . . carried to the skies  
On flowery beds of ease,"

but resolved to put forth every energy, do all possible to man, to open up this region for settlement and found a home for his family. Therefore he did not hesitate in his reply.

"I will do the best I can, Captain Williams,"

he said. "I am rather short for help. But, during the late fall and winter, I guess the boys and I can at least cut and square the timbers, and be ready to begin work on the fort early next spring."

"That will be all Colonel Stoddard could ask, I am sure," said Williams, pleased with this ready assent.

"I think it will be best for me to go back with you to-morrow," added the captain, "to learn the path and the exact location you have selected for the new fort."

"By all means. That is what I was about to suggest," said Captain Williams.

Great was the delight of Sylvanus when his father announced that he had decided to take Sylvanus with him, leaving Aaron and Titus to care for things at home.

Sylvanus was now sixteen, of age for military duty, and felt himself indeed a man as he prepared to set off with his father and the soldiers. His mother's parting words were:

"Moses, do look out for Sylvanus. You know he is apt to be venturesome and take rash risks."

"Mother," remonstrated Sylvanus, "you seem to think I am still a little boy, about the age of Artemas. I am sixteen, — quite old enough to take care of myself, I should think."

"You may be sixteen, but you have considerable to learn yet," said his mother, with a loving smile. "Old heads don't grow on young shoulders, the wise folks say."

A chorus of "good-byes" followed as the little company marched off, Sylvanus bringing up the rear, with radiant smiles waving his hand back to the group under the buttonball tree standing watching the men until they disappeared.

"What next, I wonder?" said Mrs. Rice. "Talk of our being lonely! We seem to be right in the midst of things."

The company, led by Captain Williams, turned up the shore of Rice's Brook to the north.

The path Captain Williams laid out ran steeply up, directly over South Mountain. At its summit an opening in the forest gave an opportunity to view the country around. The men halted here to rest, weary after their long, steep climb up the rocky path.

"The point I have selected for this fort you are to build," said Captain Williams, "is over to our right, on a hillside which commands the head waters of a large brook or small river, which rushes down through these hills to the Deerfield.<sup>1</sup> Our aim is to cut off access of

<sup>1</sup> Pelham Brook.

the French and Indians to the Deerfield, and so to the settlements below."

"I get a glimpse of that brook through the trees," said Captain Rice. "A fine stream. Where will the next fort to the west probably be located?"

"That I find difficult to decide," said Captain Williams, "on account of the obstacle presented by the Hoosac Mountains. I think it will have to be beyond the Hoosacs, off towards that blue mountain peak<sup>1</sup> you notice in the west."

The scramble down hill through the woods on the north slope of South Mountain now began. At last they reached the brook and forded its clear brown waters, rushing swiftly down grade over a stony bed, and then followed its course up until they reached the sloping hillside of which Captain Williams had spoken.

Here they stopped to eat their luncheons and rest. Captain Williams had blazed tree trunks on the hill, to mark out the exact dimensions of the proposed fort.

As they ate, Captain Rice said:

"I think, Captain Williams, that it will be wise for me to go on to Fort Shirley with you, that I may learn the road. It will be necessary

<sup>1</sup> Greylock.

to keep open communication between these forts; and this will be my best chance to learn the way, when we can go under the escort of your soldiers."

"Well thought of," said Captain Williams.

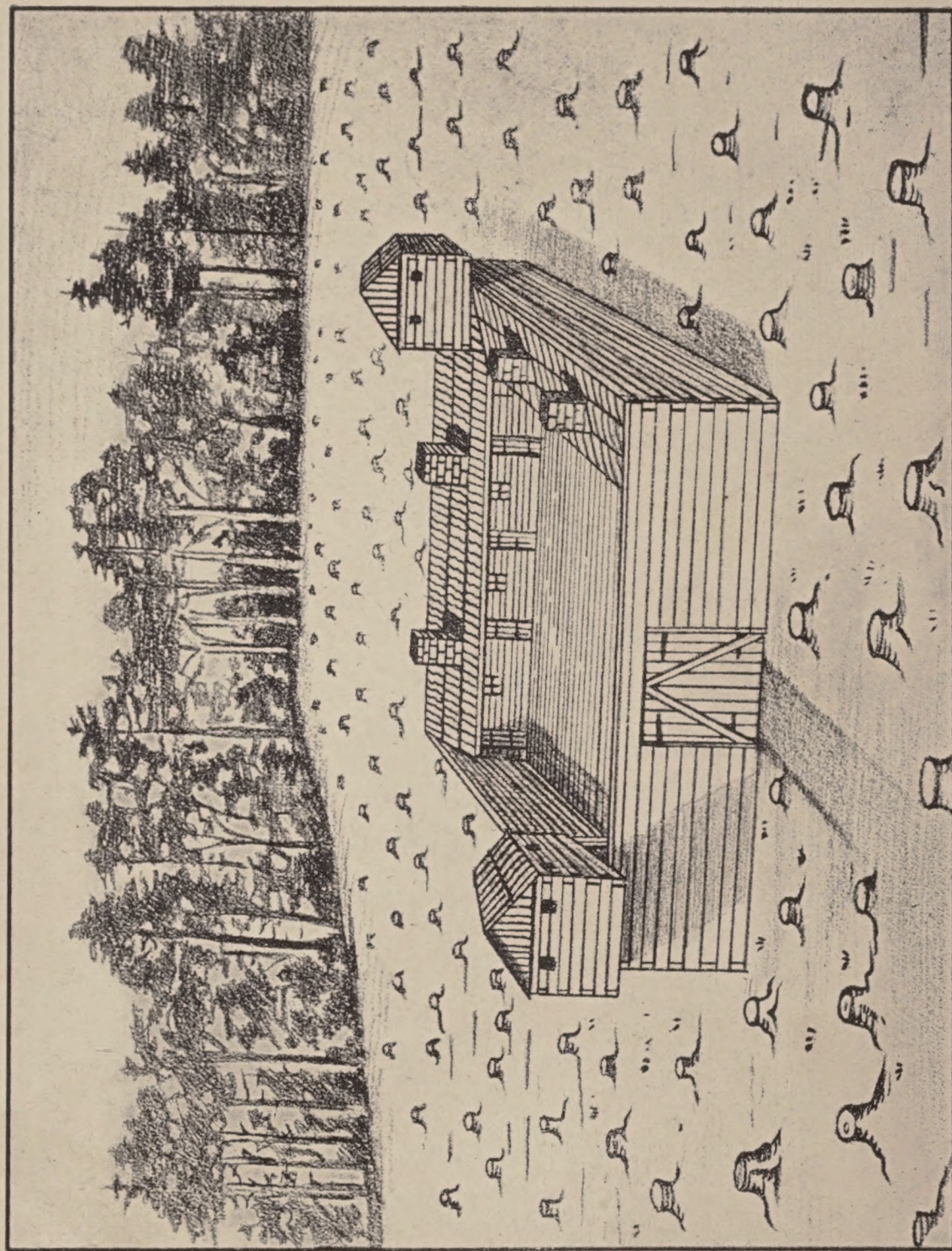
It was almost six miles farther through the forest, up hill and down, going easterly to Fort Shirley. The November day was darkening into night when the party at last came out of the woods into a small clearing.

"This is Fort Shirley," said Captain Williams.<sup>1</sup>

The Rices saw rising before them on the westward slope of a hill an enclosure sixty feet square, made of squared pine logs hewn and fastened on top of each other to the height of twelve feet. On two opposite corners were the small box-like structures called "mounts," where a sentry was always kept on guard, from which, in case of attack, the guns of the garrison could easily rake the sides of the fort. Smoke was rising from the big stone chimneys of the houses built for barracks against two of the inside walls of the fort. On all sides of the fort stood thickly the stumps of the huge pines which had been felled to construct it.

"A strong structure, well placed and well built," said Captain Rice.

<sup>1</sup> Appendix C.



OLD FORT SHIRLEY. Page 162.

Drawn from the description given in Professor Perry's "Origins in Williamstown."  
By permission of the artist.



"I had some competent carpenters to aid me, among the Scotch-Irish from Colerain," said Captain Williams; "and I consider it myself a well-built fort, for the time we spent on it. We only began work on it in July."

"I am not much of a carpenter," said Rice. "You must not expect me to construct such a fort as this."

"A strong palisade is what we want on the hills near you," said Captain Williams. "You and your sons will be quite equal to building that."

A good supper was served, cooked by some of the soldiers at one of the stone fireplaces, for wild animals abounded in the woods around, and the soldiers were glad to vary the tameness of garrison life in time of peace by hunting. Bear and venison steaks, moose and turkey meat, were plentiful at the fort, agreeably varying the regular rations of dry bread, salt pork, dried peas, and rum.

Captain Rice, glad of an opportunity to examine a recently built fort, carefully inspected every detail of its construction. Early next morning he and Sylvanus said good-bye and started for home. The day's tramp before them was not only hard, but full of possible danger, as the two well knew.

They tramped sturdily and silently along in Indian file through the unbroken forest, up and down many a hill, finding their way by the blazed trees, the captain leading, Sylvanus following.

As they walked on thus they heard an uncanny cry in the woods ahead, not unlike the scream of a child or of a woman in distress, a weird sound when heard in the lonely forest shades.

At the first wail the captain stopped, listening intently. Then he nodded his head, satisfied, whispering to Sylvanus:

"A painter.<sup>1</sup> Thought maybe it might be Indians imitating one."

They now walked cautiously along, scanning carefully the tree tops each side the way, although the cry had ceased.

At last they came to a steep pitch, where the path descended into a hollow surrounded by huge, mossy rocks. A little woodland stream trickled down through the damp hollow. As the men came nearer, they saw a deer drinking at this brook. Suddenly, from an overhanging tree, a large grayish object whirled through the air, lighting on the deer's back. It was a panther, that fastened his teeth into the deer's neck, sucking its life blood, as the poor creature

<sup>1</sup> Panther.

bounded and screamed with pain and terror, in vain efforts to escape.

Captain Rice fired, hitting the panther, which rolled off the deer's back. The deer, though bleeding from the panther's teeth and claws, bounded away into the woods. Sylvanus rushed up to the panther.

"Look out!" cried his father. "A wounded painter is fierce. Keep away from him!"

He spoke too late, for the furious panther had already leaped on Sylvanus, holding him in such a way that he could not use his gun, snarling and fastening his sharp teeth in the boy's shoulder.

"Hurry, father! Quick! He's killing me!" cried Sylvanus.

Captain Rice, pale at the danger of his son, yet cool and collected, shifted his position quickly to a point where he could aim at the panther without hitting Sylvanus. He fired. The panther loosened his hold and rolled on the ground in the agonies of death.

The captain rushed up to his son, crying:

"Are you much hurt, my boy?"

"Not very much, I guess, father," said Sylvanus, turning faint, and sinking down on a rock. "My shoulder is pretty bad."

"Lucky he did n't happen to set his teeth in your throat," said the captain.

The captain was too old a campaigner to be caught in the woods without spirit to use in emergency. Taking a small flask and a pewter cup from his knapsack, he went down to the brook and mixed a cordial which somewhat revived the boy. Then he bound up the wounded and bleeding shoulder as best he could.

After a little, Sylvanus said:

"I guess I can go on now, father."

"If you can we had best be moving, if we want to reach home before nightfall."

They started on, leaving the panther's body stretched on the ground for wolves to devour, that were at their repast as soon as the footfall of the men had ceased to rustle the leaves.

When the travellers reached the place blazed for the new fort, they stopped to eat the luncheon with which Mrs. Rice had filled their knapsacks. The ground was brown and slippery with pine needles, for the site selected for the new fort was now covered with majestic pines, towering far aloft, their tall trunks swaying in the wind which sighed through their boughs with a faint moan, almost as if bewailing the fate awaiting these primeval trees that had seen the snows of many winters fall here on the lonely hills.

"We must get right to work on these trees as soon as possible," said the captain, as they ate, looking up into the tree tops swaying high overhead. "But first I mean to fix the trail between our house and this place, so we can get horses up here. I will begin on that to-morrow, God willing."

As Sylvanus could not walk rapidly, it was late when they reached the descent down the steep southern slope of South Mountain into their own valley. Far below lay the little spot of earth that was "home" to them. There was the Deerfield winding through the pretty valley, the log house on the hillside under the buttonball tree, the fields they had cleared and cultivated, the scene of all their activities and interests. They could see Aaron, aided by Artemas and Bose, driving the cattle into the palisade.

"Aaron and Artemas and the cattle look like ants crawling around down there," said Sylvanus. "And our house seems about the size of a hen-coop."

"'What is man that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that thou visitest him?'" quoted the captain. "People are not of much more consequence than ants, when you get up high enough to take a far view of them."

"It makes us seem of very little importance," said Sylvanus.

"True. But insignificant as we are, it makes a deal of difference how each atom of us does his part. Never despise little things, Sylvanus. Everything we do counts, one way or the other. Poor Richard well says, 'For want of a Nail, the Shoe was lost; and for want of a Shoe, the Horse was lost; and for want of a Horse, the Rider was lost, being overtaken and slain by the Enemy, all for want of Care about a Horse-Shoe Nail.'"

Sylvanus made no reply; perhaps was letting his father's words go in one ear, out the other, as he wondered hungrily what mother would have for supper. Yet often, in after years, his father's counsels would return to him, to be quoted in turn to his own sons.

Mrs. Rice, as night drew on, went many times to the door, looking out anxiously for the wayfarers.

"Here you are at last," she cried in a tone of relief, as the travellers appeared. "I am glad to see you back safely. But, Sylvanus, you look pale. Are you hurt? What is the matter?"

"Nothing much," said Sylvanus, hardly able to stand, as he sank on the first stool he reached.

"He was hugged a little by a painter, mother,

back here in the woods. That's all," said the captain reassuringly. "The boy will be all right in a day or two."

"I knew how it would be. I told you so. I knew that Sylvanus would have something happen to him," said Mrs. Rice, as she proceeded to examine Sylvanus's wounds, and dress them with a home-made liniment.

The next morning the captain, true to his word, with Aaron and Titus, set to work making a rough road leading to the site of the new fort. They began on the path going steeply up South Mountain, cutting down trees, using the trunks to bridge chasms and hollows, digging out some of the largest stones, and succeeded at last in getting a rude bridle path, up which it was possible to ride. Their hardy horses, used to rough trails, sometimes forced to go where there was not even a trail, climbed this steep path with the sturdy courage of those wonted to hardships.

Tall pine after pine shuddered and came crashing down before the axes of the industrious workmen. The tops were trimmed off, and the trunks sawn and hewn into logs the right length for palisades. When the first snow fell the logs were drawn together and piled up in heaps.

The soldiers at Fort Shirley had been set by Captain Williams to clear out and make plainer and easier for travel the path from Fort Shirley to the site of the new fort, so that Captain Rice now had the satisfaction of knowing that there was a well-defined and fairly good bridle path from his house to Fort Shirley, and thence to Colerain, where the soldiers had also been at work repairing and improving the road.

The captain persevered at his task, in spite of two or three light snows. At last, early in January, there came a day of furious storm. All day long the snow fell thick and fast, driven by a high wind, banking up about the log house and palisade until they were nearly buried from sight.

After a night of storm, the next morning the sun broke through the clouds, shining down on a new, white world. The air was cold, but purity itself, clear and invigorating. It was an exhilaration merely to breathe it.

As Captain Rice and the boys took their shovels and began digging paths that were almost tunnels through the deep drifts, he said:

“Winter is here in good earnest now. No more work on the new fort until next spring.”

Dinah and Tamar, their cheeks red and glowing in the fresh, cold air, had run out to snow-

ball the boys, who returned the enemy's fire so briskly that the girls were soon glad to beat a retreat into the house.

"Come, boys, settle down to business," said the captain. "Lots of digging we have to do before we can get at the chores."

"I know one thing," said Sylvanus. "I'm glad I am not Captain Williams or one of his men, shut up there on the hills at Fort Shirley for the whole winter, half buried in snow, with no chance to hear from outside."

"Captain Williams is one that will go where his duty calls, no matter whether it is agreeable or not," said Captain Rice. "A good example for the rest of us."

## CHAPTER XII.

### SNOWSHOE SCOUTING.

CAPTAIN WILLIAMS was not a man to stay buried alive, if he were at Fort Shirley, up on a bleak hill top, miles from any settlement, with the snow lying deep in the woods around him.

One day in February the Rices were surprised to see approaching a stalwart man on snowshoes, carrying a large pack on his back. He stepped over the drifts with the skill and ease only given by much practice.

"Who can it be?" asked Dinah.

"I can't imagine," said Mrs. Rice. "I little expected travellers at this season."

"I know him," said Sylvanus, looking out the window over his mother's shoulder. "It is Sergeant Smead. I met him at Fort Shirley, and he has come from there now probably."

It proved that Sergeant Smead had been sent as a messenger from Captain Williams at Fort Shirley to Captain Josiah Willard, now

in command at Fort Dummer on the Connecticut River, above Northfield.

Captain Rice was eager to know what was being done or planned, having heard nothing from outside for some time.

"Captain Williams told me the purport of his letter," said Smead. "You doubtless know that last fall the General Court ordered that twelve men out of each of the snowshoe companies in the western part of the province, sixty men in all, were to be detached and sent out under captains to scout and range the woods constantly during the winter, from Contoocook on the Merrimac to the westward."

"So I was told, the last time I rode down to Deerfield in the fall," said the captain.

"This letter I bear is on that business," said Smead. "It is a plan to keep the scouts passing back and forth, from fort to fort, in each line, and also from line to line of the northwestern forts."

While her northern boundary was still unsettled, the province of Massachusetts, during Father Rasle's War (in 1723-24), to protect her settlements in the Connecticut Valley below, had built a strong fort on the west bank of the Connecticut above Northfield (then the northernmost settlement), called

Fort Dummer.<sup>1</sup> And in 1736 Massachusetts had laid out four townships east of the Connecticut above Northfield, called Townships Nos. 1, 2, 3, and 4, respectively.<sup>2</sup>

In 1740 three families by the name of Farnsworth from Lunenburg, Mass., had ventured up into the wilderness and begun a settlement at No. 4, forty-five miles above Northfield, the nearest settlement. They were soon joined by Capt. Phineas Stevens of Rutland and a few other families. In 1743 these venturesome settlers built a mill, and a fort which soon became well known as Fort No. 4. On the west side of the Connecticut a few settlers had located at Great Meadows and at Vernon, each having a blockhouse or two for defence, and within the limits of New Hampshire there were a few settlers at Upper and Lower Ashuelot.<sup>3</sup>

There were therefore two lines of forts: one running north and south, on the Connecticut; the other at right angles to it, east and west, along the northern border of Massachusetts.

A boundary dispute had long been waged between Massachusetts and New Hampshire. To settle this, Governor Belcher had in 1741

<sup>1</sup> At Brattleboro.

<sup>2</sup> Now Chesterfield, Westmoreland, Walpole, and Charlestown, N.H.

<sup>3</sup> Keene and Swanzey, N.H.

sent one Richard Hazen to survey a boundary line, running west from a point on the Merrimac even farther south than New Hampshire had dared claim.

“Hazen’s Line” threw all the forts built by Massachusetts into New Hampshire, a palpable injustice which not only bred much ill feeling between Massachusetts and New Hampshire, but also, in Massachusetts, against the home government.

But when the present war broke out, as New Hampshire, a new and weak province, most of whose settlements were along the Merrimac, declared herself wholly unable to maintain her newly acquired forts on the Connecticut, Massachusetts, in spite of her injuries, assumed the entire care of these forts. The snowshoe companies, raised and maintained by Massachusetts, were to scout constantly back and forth along the two lines of forts.

Aaron Rice had many questions to ask of Sergeant Smead about the snowshoe companies.

“They go out in little squads, under a corporal or sergeant,” said Smead, in reply to Aaron’s queries. “The government furnishes them with snowshoes. A handsome bounty is paid now by our government for Indian scalps, making it quite an object for young men to enlist.”

"I should love to go out snowshoe scouting," said Aaron eagerly. "Don't you think you could spare me, father, for a while this winter, now you have Titus to help?"

"I don't know. I will consider the matter and decide later," said Captain Rice.

Sergeant Smead departed on his way. But, not many days after, a company of ten snowshoe scouts appeared at Captain Rice's, to be entertained over night. These scouts were mostly Deerfield young men, led by Sergeant John Hawks. The Rice boys were glad to find among them Matthew Clesson, Jonathan Hoyt, Thomas Nims, Gershom Hawks, Oliver Amsden, and others of their friends.

"May I ask your plans, Sergeant?" said Captain Rice. "I suppose they are not a military secret."

The company of young men were seated around the long table, in the cheerful light of the fire blazing high in the big fireplace, doing a valiant trencher service no doubt typical of their exploits in war, should they encounter the enemy. After journeying the twenty-two miles from Deerfield on snowshoes, the smoking hot supper which Mrs. Rice and her daughters had prepared, plain though it was, relished wonderfully.

"No secret from you, Captain Rice, at all events," said Hawks. "We are bound for Fort Shirley, thence to Fort Morrison in Cole-rain, and across country to Burk's Fort at Falltown. Then up the Connecticut to Fort Dummer and Fort No. 4, and back by way of Northfield to Deerfield. I'm sorry to say we are short of men. We ought to have two more by good rights."

Aaron started at this, his eyes flashing eagerly.

"How happens it that you have not your full quota of men?" asked Captain Rice.

"Governor Shirley has some secret military expedition planned," said Hawks. "He has sent orders to Colonel Stoddard to enlist men for this expedition, and Stoddard sent out Capt. Seth Pomeroy of Northampton to beat up for men all over the upper part of Hampshire County. Colonel Stoddard also wrote to Captain Williams at Fort Shirley to drum up volunteers, and about sixteen of his men at the fort have enlisted. The garrison at Fort Shirley had to be filled, and men have been in such demand we could not secure our full number."

"I wonder much what Governor Shirley is planning to do," said Rice.

"We shall know in due time, no doubt" said

Hawks. "His plans are a profound secret now. Meantime I am anxious to fill up my numbers. Sergeant Smead gave me some hope that your son Aaron might join us."

"I am ready to go," said Aaron.

"If he is really needed, he can go," said Captain Rice.

It was late ere the Rices slept that night. Every one was bustling about, making Aaron ready to start early the next morning. Mrs. Rice, as she packed a knapsack of necessities for her son, hunting up her thickest homespun blankets for his use, and crowding in extra pairs of warm woolen socks, said to Dinah, who was helping her:

"There is one comfort. The worst of the winter is over. It is late February, and he only has to be out about a month. I hope he will get enough of soldiering to content him for a while."

When, the next morning, the scouts marched off in long file, Aaron bringing up the rear, his fur cap pulled well down over his ears, his blankets and knapsack strapped on his back, his mother stood in the door watching him with tear-dimmed eyes until a hill at last hid him from her sight.

Though Aaron too felt somewhat affected by

the solemnity of the words "good-bye" under such circumstances, yet, with the light-heartedness of youth, he soon shed any sad reflections, animated by the exhilarating feeling that he was departing for new scenes and experiences.

The men strode on over the snow in silence, walking in Indian file, about a rod apart. This was done that, in case of ambush, Indians might not be able to pick off more than one or two men at most. The rest would instantly seek cover behind tree trunks, and fight the Indians in their own fashion.

They journeyed on due east. The path was up and down many a hill, and Aaron, although well accustomed to short trips on snowshoes, had never before taken such a long tramp on the cumbersome things. His legs began to ache almost beyond endurance, and he was heartily glad when, as the sun sank behind the western mountains, in descending a hill he saw, across the valley below, a clearing on the opposite hillside, in which stood a log fort, which he knew must be Fort Shirley.

As, immediately after supper, the scouts rolled up in their blankets and lay down on the floor in one of the rooms to sleep, their knapsacks under their heads, Jonathan said to Aaron:

"Do your legs cramp any, Aaron?"

"Some," answered Aaron, not disposed to complain. Really his muscles seemed drawn into knots.

"It will be hard travelling for you at first to-morrow morning," said Jonathan. "But the only remedy is to keep at it. It grows a little easier each day out."

"This floor is n't a feather bed, to state the case mildly," said Nims. "But I tell you, Aaron, this is luxury compared to camping out in the woods all night."

"I've enlisted for the whole campaign, and mean to take it as it comes," said Aaron.

"That's right. That's the way to talk. No use in whining," said Nims.

The tired scouts were soon fast asleep, rising next morning with limbs a little lame and stiff from their hard bed, but ready to start off as soon as breakfast was over.

About noon the scouts reached the block-house of Hugh Morrison on North River in Colerain, known as Fort Morrison. Hugh Morrison was one of the resolute Scotch-Irishmen who had taken up land in this new region.

Here Sergeant Hawks was pleased to secure another recruit in David Morrison, son of Hugh, an active, courageous young man, who, like Aaron, was eager to enlist when he learned

that there was a vacancy in the scouting company.

As they went on, David Morrison proved of especial service as a guide over the very hilly country covered with forest that lay between his father's fort and Burk's Fort in Falltown, having often traversed this trail.

The trail crossed the Green River. As the scouts were descending cautiously down a steep hillside into the deep ravine through which Green River flows on her way to the Deerfield, they were startled by hearing a noise. Any noise in the stillness of the wintry forest was suggestive of unpleasant possibilities.

Sergeant Hawks, by a motion of his hand, called a halt. All strained their ears to listen. Down in the ravine below was certainly a crackling of twigs and branches, caused by something moving.

The march was resumed. Peering through the tree trunks, at length they saw a huge moose, which had come down from the woods upon the river's ice to drink at an open place where the black current flowed too swiftly to be frozen.

It made a pretty woodland picture: the river's white plain winding among the snow-covered hills, in whose woods rose many a dark

green pine, spruce, or hemlock; and the solitary moose drinking at the opening in the ice. But the scouts were in no mood to appreciate the picturesque. They must not fire their guns unless absolutely necessary, as they well understood. They rushed down on the ice, surrounding the moose, which, terrified at this sudden invasion of its solitudes, ran back towards the woods, hoping to escape. The snow on the hillside's southern slope had softened in the February sun, and the heavy animal sank in deeply. The scouts had no difficulty in killing it with clubs and hatchets, and went on, well laden with moose meat, much pleased at this stroke of good luck.

Burk's Fort stood on the banks of Fall River. It was a log structure, built by Capt. John Burk for the protection of himself and family and other settlers.

Captain Burk gave the scouts a warm welcome, and plenty of their moose meat was soon roasting before the fire, sending out odors most tempting to hungry men who had been living on cold salt pork and bread. Mrs. Burk, who was Jonathan Hoyt's oldest sister, Sarah, was overjoyed to see her brother and other Deerfield friends, and anxious to do all in her power for their comfort.

"We are almost deserted here now," said Captain Burk in an evening talk beside the fire with Sergeant Hawks. "This war has given Falltown a hard blow. We had seven families here and more coming, and a meeting-house and settled minister of our own, Rev. John Norton. But now we are nearly broken up. All but two families have left, and Mr. Norton is going as soon as he can get escort to Deerfield. His wife and children returned to Springfield when the war broke out, and he will join them there."

"There is certainly little outlook for a minister here, in these troubled times," said Hawks.

"I can but feel it hard that the mother country should precipitate us into war, for matters that we know and care nothing about," said Burk. "Here we were, settled and peaceable, opening up a new country, everything thriving, when lo, we are plunged into war, simply because the home government so decides, without any quarrel of our own."

"And then France hastens to let loose all the Indians in Canada on our poor settlements," said Hawks.

Rev. John Norton, a pleasant, kindly young man of thirty, asked a blessing at the supper table. Soon after supper he held the regular

evening prayers, before the scouts camped down for the night.

The scouts were tired to the last degree, and almost unable to keep their eyes open. Yet on all hearts descended a sense of peace and protection as Mr. Norton's voice, in a tone of reverent faith, read the Twenty-seventh Psalm, and followed it by a fervent prayer.

With the early dawn the scouts were off to the northeast, their knapsacks heavy with an agreeable addition to their provisions in shape of some cold roast moose meat. Sergeant Hawks led the way over the snow and through the trackless woods with the confidence of one who travels a familiar road. At first Aaron wondered at this confidence, but soon began to see signs of a trail; a blazed tree now and then, or trees cut in places from the path and rolled down to fill up hollows.

"This trail must be well known to Sergeant Hawks," thought Aaron.

Well might he think so, for this was the old Indian trail north to Canada, and over it had travelled all the sorrowful captives from Deerfield in 1704.

The sun, high overhead, at last indicated that it was noon, as the scouts' hunger also informed them, but still Hawks pressed on, not

halting as they expected. But the reason was plain when, coming out of the dense forest through which they had journeyed all the forenoon, they saw below them a stretch of open meadows and the snowy, white plain of a large river, which they knew must be the Connecticut.

The scouts' hearts were gladdened to see in these meadows two small blockhouses standing about a half mile apart, but otherwise solitary and alone in the wide stretch of unsettled country. These were Fort Sawtelle and Fort Bridgman.<sup>1</sup> Smoke curling up from their chimneys promised warmth and rest, and the men pressed eagerly after him as Hawks led the way to the nearer blockhouse, Fort Sawtelle, where its builder, Josiah Sawtelle, and his wife gave the scouts a cordial reception.

Josiah Sawtelle had ventured up into these wilds from Lancaster to settle in 1739, followed in a few years by fellow townsmen, William Phipps and others. Sawtelle's beautiful young daughter, Jemima, had married William Phipps and gone up to Great Meadow to live.

After a short rest on went the scouts, sometimes along the frozen surface of the broad river, where walking was comparatively easy,

<sup>1</sup> In Vernon, Vt.

but oftener in the woods either side the river, to examine them for traces of Indians.

The sun had set, the twilight was fast darkening into night, the cold wind roared gloomily through the trees, and still the weary march through the wilds continued. Aaron thought to himself:

"We will have to camp on the snow to-night, I guess."

The darkness increasing, Hawks returned to the river's icy bed. The stars twinkled out above until the sky's dark vault gleamed with their brilliance, shedding a faint light on the snow. Aaron now saw on their right the bulk of a high mountain rising darkly up beneath the stars. Then Jonathan Hoyt turned, pointing ahead to a light streaming cheerfully forth into the darkness from a low structure dimly seen in the starlight on the left.

"Fort Dummer,"<sup>1</sup> said Jonathan, falling back near Aaron.

This was good news to Aaron, for the fort promised comfortable shelter. Moreover he had heard much of Fort Dummer, and was pleased that at last he should see it. All the scouts felt the same interest. But so weary were they on arrival that they cared for

<sup>1</sup> Brattleboro, Vt.

nothing but to lie down at once, as soon as they had eaten supper.

In the early morning Aaron and some of the others were up, eager to improve the opportunity to inspect the fort. A young soldier, one of the garrison, joined them to act as escort.

The fort was twenty feet high, built of hewn pine logs, similar to the other forts of the time. It was about one hundred and fifty feet square, though somewhat irregular in shape, narrowest on the side towards the river. Mounts were built on each corner, projecting beyond the walls from four to eleven feet, thus forming bastions for defence. In two of these mounts a large cannon was mounted. Several small houses were built against the inner walls of the fort. Without, a stockade surrounding the fort enclosed an acre and a half of meadow land.

Aaron noticed that some of the houses were unoccupied, and asked:

“For whom are these houses meant? For settlers to occupy in case of war?”

“No,” said the soldier. “Those are the houses built for the use of the Indians. You know there was a truck-house kept here, with Capt. Joseph Kellogg for truck-master. As he had lived so long a captive in Canada, he under-

stood not only the Indians' language, but how to deal with them. Six Indian chiefs were kept here for ten years, regularly commissioned and paid by our government, three Caghnawagas and three Scatacooks. The Caghnawagas were Colonel Ontosogo, Lieutenant-Colonel Thyhau-selkou, and Major Conneighau; and the Scatacooks were Captain Massaquan, Captain Nanna-toohau, and Lieutenant Massamah."

The boys laughed at these titles, prefixed to Indian names.

"Never were Indians better treated. Some of the meadow land was set apart for their special use, and they were invited to bring their families here, and given many privileges. Many Indians used to resort here to trade their furs. There were lively scenes here in the spring; the river shore lined with canoes drawn up and turned over, with other canoes coming down from the north, heavily laden with furs, the product of the winter's hunt, and Indians, in blankets and feathers, coming and going. The government hoped by all this kindness to make strong friends of the tribes north and west of us, and so wean them from the French."

"One would suppose that even Indians would have appreciated such kind treatment," said Oliver Amsden.

“But they did n’t. At the first hint of war, before we had even heard that it was declared, Colonel Ontosogo, Captain Massaquan, and all the others, every Indian of them all, disappeared, vanished like dry leaves before a gale of wind, and we have seen no more of them.”

After breakfast the scouts delayed only for the morning prayer of Rev. Edward Billings, the young chaplain now stationed at this remote fort. They travelled north about six miles, reaching the small settlement of four or five houses clustered around a blockhouse at Great Meadows.<sup>1</sup> The scouts halted here for a short rest, receiving the usual warm and hearty welcome from the isolated settlers. William Phipps said to his wife:

“Jemima, cannot you give the scouts a warm bite of something? I’ve been out scouting myself, and I well know how something hot relishes after tramping through the cold woods on snowshoes.”

“I was just going to put some of my mince pies warming,” said Mrs. Phipps.

Into the bake-oven before the blazing fire went three big mince pies, and as, later, the scouts ate the delicious pies and drank some of her home-brewed beer, they gazed both

<sup>1</sup> Putney, Vt.

gratefully and admiringly on their handsome young hostess, as kind as she was pretty.

Nehemiah Howe, one of the settlers, in talking with Sergeant Hawks about the prospects of the war, said:

"We have a blockhouse of our own, as you see, for refuge in case of sudden attack; but we really rely chiefly on Fort Dummer for our safety. We shall all take refuge there, in case we see strong indications of Indians. But we feel greatly protected by your snowshoe scoutings."

"We have found no signs of Indians on this scout as yet," said Hawks.

As the scouts were about starting on again, much refreshed by the rest and the little luncheon at Great Meadow, Sergeant Hawks said:

"Boys, from this point on is the most dangerous part of our way, where we are most exposed to encounters with the enemy. There is nothing in the wilderness now between us and Canada but the little post at No. 4."

The scouts hardly needed this warning, for all realized that they were now remote from civilization, with nothing human to rely upon but their own strength and sagacity. The mountains, as they went farther north, were heavily wooded, the dark green of huge pines, firs, spruce, hemlocks, and cedars predominat-

ing. It was a wildly beautiful yet dreary landscape in the scouts' eyes, and gave more than one of them a twinge of forlorn homesickness.

The scouts found some slight signs of possible enemies, and used extra vigilance. They marched farther that day than on any previous, and all were glad to see the sun sinking, all too slowly as it seemed to the tired men, who were quite ready to halt.

For some time, through the silence as they strode along, they had heard a roaring, rushing sound to the north, growing louder as they went on. At last, in the dusk of evening, they reached a spot where the Connecticut swept around a turn close beneath a high mountain which towered up from its eastern shore, and dashed down over great rocks in natural falls.<sup>1</sup>

"We shall have to camp here to-night," said Sergeant Hawks. "Cut your boughs and spread them under these thick-growing hemlocks on the bank yonder."

The scouts now found use for the sharp hatchets fastened at their belts. Working cautiously, making as little noise as possible, they hacked off from fir and hemlock trees boughs, which they spread thickly on a sloping bank under the shelter of the drooping hemlock

<sup>1</sup> Bellows Falls.

branches, having first scraped away some of the snow, banking it up around the sides of their rough bed.

Of course no camp-fire could be built. After hurriedly eating some of their cold luncheons, they rolled up in their blankets and lay down, curling up closely together on their bed of hemlock boughs for greater warmth.

All was still, save the roaring of the falls. Up and down paced the sentry, Matthew Cleson, who was on guard for the first half of the night. A situation more lonely and dreary could hardly be imagined. The wild rushing of the river through the darkness, the huge bulk of the strange mountain towering up across the stream, the feeling of the possibility of one of the sudden attacks always imminent in Indian warfare, all combined to add to the young scout's feeling of loneliness and helplessness. He thought of his young wife, Abigail (Nabby Hoyt), fast asleep, safe and sound, in her warm bed in far-away Deerfield.

"God bless her!" he thought, with a warm glow of love that made his heart beat faster. "The chances are that the girl is not asleep at all, but lying awake, worrying about me, perhaps praying for my safe keeping."

Presently he fancied he detected another

sound above the rushing of the falls, remote, but growing nearer and nearer. Yes, now he recognized it. It was the howling of a pack of wolves, a dreary sound heard amid such surroundings.

Apparently the hungry wolves, starving in the naked winter woods, had scented human flesh from afar, and were stealing through the forest hoping for a feast. Soon Clesson, in the dim starlight, saw, or thought he saw, objects creeping stealthily from under the overhanging hemlocks towards the sleeping scouts.

Clesson fired. Something bounded up, with an angry snarl and yelp. Instantly, at report of the musket, every man was on his feet, gun in hand. The pack of wolves, undismayed, came on, surrounding the scouts on all sides, snapping, snarling, and leaping, and were only repulsed after several had been slain. Then the rest retreated into the depths of the forest, whence their dreary howls, heard in the distance, did not tend to soothe the slumbers of the scouts, who lay down again, trying to sleep. Thomas Nims had now taken Matthew Clesson's place as sentry, and the tired Matthew was the only man who slept soundly the rest of the night.

Every one was ready to get up with the

break of day. Aaron rose limpingly, rubbing his side.

"What is the matter with you, Aaron?" asked David Morrison.

"Nothing, only I believe I am marked for life by that big branch that stuck into my ribs all night," said Aaron.

"I was so tired I should have slept as soundly as if in my bed at home," said David, "but for our callers. There they lie, some of them," he added, pointing to the wolves whose dead bodies lay stretched out on the blood-stained, trampled snow.

"Boys, cut off their ears," said Sergeant Hawks. "If we can get them back to Deerfield, we will divide the bounty equally among our number, share and share alike."

On again to the north marched the scouts, after forcing down enough frozen food from their knapsacks to sustain life, soon crossing the river to its eastern side. Marching some distance, they saw opposite them the mouth of a small river which came down through the defiles of the western hills to the Connecticut.

Sergeant Hawks halted, and passed the word down the line:

"Yonder is the mouth of Williams River."

Williams River! Well did the Deerfield men

know that this was the place where, in 1704, the French and Indians, on their return with their captives from Deerfield, had camped over Sunday, and where Rev. John Williams had preached to the desolate captives, thus giving the river its name. On many a winter evening, by the glowing fireside, had they heard vividly rehearsed the story of that dreary Sunday by friends or relations who had been among the captives.

No wonder they gazed upon it with greatest interest, finding strength and courage in their own hardships from the remembrance of sufferings so much more terrible endured, not only by men, but by frail women and children, in this same region, forty years previous.

Early in the morning they left the meadows along the river, following the base of a line of high hills which ran along on their right. At last they came to a small clearing in the woods on the plain of the fertile upland, where, scattered about among the stumps, stood a few houses, with a stockade fort in their midst.

"Here we are at last, boys, at No. 4,"<sup>1</sup> said Hawks cheerily.

Glad were the exhausted men to know that the northernmost limit of their scout had

<sup>1</sup> Charlestown, N.H.

finally been reached, and that, although the sun still lacked two hours of setting, they could now stop and rest at ease. They looked worn and haggard as they huddled around the fire in the fort's stone fireplaces, where the huge logs blazed high, sending a grateful warmth into their chilled, half-frozen limbs.

Capt. Phineas Stevens, commander of the fort, a brave and resolute man, gave the scouts hearty welcome, and Stephen Farnsworth, his brothers, and the other settlers flocked into the fort, having seen the scouts march in, glad to see the men from Deerfield, and eager to learn the latest news from Boston about the war.

A little cluster of nine or ten families were living in huts near each other around the fort, in this remote place on the banks of the Connecticut. In 1743 they had built not only the fort, but a cornmill and a sawmill. They chiefly relied upon this fort and the leadership of Captain Stevens for protection, though all were brave men, prepared to defend their homes and families with life itself if need be.

Mrs. Farnsworth and others of the settlers' wives brought in food to aid Mrs. Stevens in hospitably entertaining the scouts, glad also of an excuse to see some one from the far-away

world of civilization. After a hot supper that greatly refreshed the half-starved men, they sat around the glowing fire, while supper and evening work were cleared away, until the floor should be free for them to camp down.

A pleasant touch of homelikeness was given to the scene by the appearance of an old spaniel and a large cat, that, after cautiously sniffing the strangers over, seemed to decide that they were trustworthy, and affably accepted the many attentions lavished upon them.

"What is your name, sir?" asked Aaron, as he patted the silky head of the brown spaniel that looked up at him with bright, friendly eyes.

"That is my dog Towser," said Stevens. "We could n't get along without Towser. He can scent an Indian half a mile away, can't you, Towser?"

Towser assented by a short, sharp bark, wagging his tail proudly at the praises heaped upon him.

The cat had leaped up into Oliver Amsden's lap, and, stretched out on his knee, purred and knit its paws rapturously into Oliver's leathern breeches, as Oliver stroked its soft yellow fur.

"It seems like home to see a cat again," said Oliver. "My mother is a great hand to have cats around."

"So is my wife," said Stevens. "When we moved up here she insisted on bringing Thomas with us. He was a little kitten then. She brought him in a basket on horseback. When I milked the cows which we drove up with us, I always had to milk some into a pewter porringer for Thomas. A bother I thought it, save as it pleased my wife, who was taking her life in her hand, venturing into the wilderness with me. But Thomas more than earns his board. He keeps both house and grain-bin free from rats and mice."

Sergeant Hawks felt it necessary to rest a few days at Fort No. 4 before beginning the homeward tramp. The morning on which the scouts at last left the fort was fair, but ominous gray cloud banks lay low along the western horizon.

"Sergeant," said Stephen Farnsworth, as the scouts were marching away, "those clouds yonder are snow banks, or I am no weather prophet. I fear you will be caught in a snow-storm."

"We shall push on as rapidly as possible to the south," said Hawks. "Perhaps we can keep ahead of the storm."

The scouts' course this day was along the river's eastern shore. Toward noon they

reached the foot of the high mountain opposite Great Falls. Sergeant Hawks, halting, called his men around him and said:

“It is necessary that we climb this mountain part way, at least, to spy the country around for smokes.”

“We will follow, Sergeant, wherever you lead,” said Clesson.

The mountain towered above the men in stern grandeur. Its steep, snow-clad side was broken by rocks jutting blackly out, on which grew dark pines and firs, leaning over as if they might at any moment lose their precarious foothold and come sliding down. The mountain seemed to frown down sternly on the puny human beings at its foot.

Undismayed, the scouts began the climb, at last attaining a height commanding a far outlook over the surrounding country. No smokes were visible, though Hawks noted a suspicious blue haze in the far north, up the river. Meantime the clouds had crept over the sky until it was a cold gray, the sun had vanished, and the air was intensely chilly. Sergeant Hawks felt it advisable to hasten down the mountain.

If the ascent had been difficult, going down was even harder, but at least each step brought them nearer the bottom. It was already dark

when they reached the mountain's foot, for the night had set in early.

Hawks ordered the camp to be made at the mountain's foot. Nims was placed on guard the first half of the night. The others made the usual couch of hemlock boughs and tumbled down on it, thankful to rest. As Aaron and Jonathan lay down side by side, Aaron, shivering, drew his blanket tighter about him, saying:

"I believe I never was so cold. I wonder if we are not in some danger of freezing before morning."

"If we could only have a good rousing camp-fire it would be a great comfort," said Jonathan. "But of course that would not answer. We shall have to stand it."

Aaron was so thoroughly fagged out that he fell asleep in spite of his discomfort. Waking during the night, he was surprised to find himself perfectly comfortable, a cozy warmth glowing through his body.

"Seems as if I were at home," he thought sleepily, as he dropped off again into heavy slumber.

When he awoke in the morning and threw the blanket down from his head, to his surprise a small avalanche of snow tumbled into his



“Shaggy white with snow, the scouts plodded resolutely on.”

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face. Raising his head and peering around, he found that his sleeping comrades, like himself, had been covered with several inches of snow during the night. All around him the sleeping forms of the scouts made mounds under the new-fallen snow, like white graves.

Aaron sat up, laughing aloud. Out popped Jonathan's head from under the snow, he staring around at first in blank surprise, then joining Aaron in his laugh, as head after head popped out from under its snowy coverlid.

"That snowstorm did us a good turn last night," said Aaron.

"'T was better than a wadded comforter," said Jonathan.

But although the snow had answered so admirably for bed covering, it promised anything but a comfortable day for walking. It was still falling when the scouts resumed their march southward. They had no choice. They must perforce go on. To keep walking was their only safety.

To make matters worse, a gale of wind was blowing, whirling the swift-flying snowflakes all about them in a wild dance.

Shaggy white with snow, the scouts plodded resolutely on, seeming like ghosts as they glided along in the mist of whirling snowflakes

through the silent woods. Sergeant Hawks maintained the best pace possible under the circumstances, for he knew it was absolutely necessary to reach shelter that evening, and the scouts put forth every atom of strength to keep up with their energetic leader.

When, as it grew dark, they safely reached Fort Hinsdale, all felt that never had food, shelter, fire, been quite so welcome as on this stormy night. They had the warmest reception from Col. Ebenezer Hinsdale and his wife, for both were Deerfield people. Sergeant Hawks brought Mrs. Hinsdale letters from her brother, Capt. Elijah Williams, and other friends, and for Colonel Hinsdale letters from both the Captain Williamses, with the latest tidings from England and the Bay about the war.

Like most people in Deerfield at that time, the Hinsdales were but too familiar with the horrors of Indian warfare. Colonel Hinsdale was born at sea, during the return of his parents, Mehuman Hinsdale and wife, from Canadian captivity in 1706. His father, Mehuman, was again captured in 1709, and carried away to Canada. Colonel Hinsdale's wife, Abigail, was the eldest daughter of the Rev. John Williams by his second wife, and a half-sister of Rev. Stephen Williams of Longmeadow, the "Boy

Captive.” Well did she and her husband realize the danger of their position. But they stayed courageously at their post, determined to protect the little settlement they were trying to upbuild in the wilderness. Although much of Colonel Hinsdale’s time and attention was necessarily given to his settlement at Fort Hinsdale, he still retained his estate in Deerfield, which during his absence was managed for him by his faithful slave, Meshick.

Mrs. Hinsdale was a woman of fine presence, handsome, dignified, and stately, her expression indicating resolution and spirit. As she directed her slaves, Chloe and Noble, in the preparation of an excellent hot supper for the exhausted scouts, Clesson, watching her, said to Hawks as she left the room:

“Young Madam Hinsdale seems a woman of unusual spirit.”

“You may well say that,” said Hawks. “She has spirit enough for a whole garrison. When the colonel is sometimes called to Deerfield, she remains here to manage matters in his absence. He can safely rely on her judgment and courage, and leave all in her care.”

Jonathan Hoyt had known black Chloe ever since he was a small boy, as the Hinsdales’

Deerfield home was near his father's house. Many a cooky had Chloe slipped into his hand when he was playing about in days gone by.

When Jonathan limped nearer the fire, Chloe, her black face shining in the firelight, as she bent over her large frying pan, exclaimed:

"Land sakes, Marse Jonathan! Is that you? How ever did you happen to come way off up here in the woods?"

"I'm out scouting, Chloe," said Jonathan.

"Well, well, to think that the children have to come to it! It don't seem more 'n yesterday since I was spanking you for dipping into my raspberry jam when my back was turned," said Chloe, her teeth gleaming white as she laughed.

Jonathan laughed too at this reminiscence of his boyhood.

"Anyway, it's a sight good for sore eyes to see some folks from Deerfield," added Chloe, asking many questions about Parson Ashley's "Jin," Luce 'Bijah, the Sheldons' "Coffee," Meshick, and others of her friends among the Deerfield slaves, as she worked.

The next morning dawned bright and beautiful, the sun shining with dazzling radiance on the pure, fresh snow covering hill and meadow and frozen river, loading down the tree boughs

and half burying the little log huts clustered around Fort Hinsdale.

The scouts were all lame and footsore, yet nevertheless must set forth.

By steady toil over the fresh snow at last they reached Northfield, where they were quartered at the large mount and fort of Capt. Ebenezer Alexander. The mount, built on the rising land east of his house, was two stories in height, forming the east end of a fort which sloped down hill to the west, enclosing the buildings and yard. A small garrison was kept at this fort by the government, and it was altogether a more imposing place than some of the other forts which the scouts had visited.

Northfield was an important place to defend. For some years it had been the frontier town to the north. Since the building of Fort Dummer, and since several small settlements had been started above Northfield, its people had felt a greater sense of security, yet still just fears were suffered of possible Indian raids, and the arrival of this band of scouts from the north, with word that no strong signs of Indians had been discovered, gave great relief to the Northfield people.

After a day or two spent resting here, the scouts went on down the river. They crossed

the Connecticut a little above the old Peskeompskut Falls, now often called Turners Falls, in memory of Capt. William Turner who, during King Philip's War, led the fight at these falls which broke the power of the Indians in this vicinity. Fragments of half-burned, blackened logs, strewing the ground among the trees and bushes which had grown up on the spot, still showed where the Indian camp had been burned by the English under Turner.

Crossing a high rocky ridge west of the river,<sup>1</sup> the scouts came down into a pleasant valley beyond. As they descended the side of the ridge, smoke was seen rising to the south.

"That is Green River district," said Jonathan. "We are in Deerfield now, almost at home."

"For one, I shall not be sorry to see Deerfield street," said Aaron, and so felt all the scouts.

The scouts, excepting Thomas Nims, who lived in the Green River district, pushed on, weary though they were, impatient to reach home. As they marched into the north end of Deerfield's long street, the lights streaming cheerfully out from Parson Ashley's house seemed to give these returning Deerfield men a friendly welcome.

<sup>1</sup> Rocky Mountain in Greenfield.

"Well, boys, here we are, through the mercies of God, safely home again," said Sergeant Hawks.

"Of course you will stop with me, Aaron," said Jonathan, as he joyfully rushed into his father's house, followed by Aaron.

The family were sitting quietly around the evening fire, busy with their usual occupations. Mrs. Hoyt had just said with a sigh:

"I wish I knew where Jonathan is to-night. It seems so long since he went away, with no means of hearing from him, or knowing whether he be dead or alive."

"Pooh, pooh," began Lieutenant Hoyt reassuringly, when open burst the door with a rush of cold outer air, and in limped Jonathan!

He was received almost like one risen from the dead.

"Oh, Jonathan, my son, my son," cried the mother, with tears of joy, while his father gripped his son's hand, and scanning his face, said:

"Pretty well used up, I guess, Jonathan, my boy."

"Yes, father. But I don't care, now it is done and I am home again."

Aaron too was given most friendly greeting. Mrs. Hoyt said:

"You must not think of starting for home,

Aaron, until you are well rested and over your lameness. You had both better go right to bed. Here is a bottle of my angleworm ointment. Rub it well in. It is a sure cure for lameness."

As the boys tumbled into the soft pigeon-feather bed, it seemed indeed the height of luxury after lying so long on hard floors or the snowy ground. The sense of repose, of entire relaxation from the long strain of vigilant watching, was so great that they slept without waking until ten o'clock the next morning, an unheard-of idleness in a Puritan family.

"Shall I call the boys, mother?" asked the lieutenant at the breakfast table.

"No, let the poor fellows sleep as long as they can. They need it. It made my heart ache to see how thin and worn and fagged out they both looked when they came in last night," said motherly Mrs. Hoyt.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### GOOD NEWS.

THE next day Aaron, being partly rested, could no longer restrain his impatience to be at home. He knew his father would need his help about the spring work, soon to begin, and he longed to see home again after this, his first long absence. So off he went, alone and on foot, to traverse the twenty-two miles, largely up hill, that lay between Deerfield and home.

He set off at break of day, to journey as far as possible before the sun should thaw the crust. As he walked briskly on, he was alert for the slightest unusual sight or sound. His brief experience as a scout seemed to have sharpened his senses, made him more sensitive to sounds.

"No Indian is going to catch me unawares," he thought as he trudged on.

The air was pure and clear, the sun sparkled on the glittering crust, and there was a feeling of elation in walking freely and easily high up above the ground on top the snowdrifts, his feet crunching the icy crust as he strode swiftly

on. He carried his snowshoes on his back. Later, when the crust thawed, he would be obliged to wear them.

But for the happy thoughts that absorbed his mind, thoughts of soon being at home again and meeting the dear ones there, and the feeling of having done a hard duty manfully, Aaron would have found it dreary tramping on through the forest all day long, without the sight of one house or fence or sign of human life to vary the monotony. Toward night, as he was nearing home, the path, which had run close along the Deerfield's bank, turned more to the right, away from the river and near the hills. At this point Aaron's ears, sensitive to the least sound, heard a slight noise in the woods at foot of the hills on his right.

Cautiously slipping along in the direction of the noise, he was in time to see a large she-bear climbing clumsily backward down an immense old oak, in whose hollow trunk she had probably spent the winter.

If Aaron had not molested her, probably she would have gone her way, paying no attention to him. But she furnished too inviting a mark, and Aaron hastily fired, wounding but not killing the bear. She turned instantly and came fiercely at him.

Aaron fired again, wounding the bear on the head, enraging her the more. With furious growls she rose on her hind legs and plunged towards Aaron, trying to clutch him with her paws in a death hug. Aaron beat her back with his gunstock, thinking:

“Pretty business this, if I have scouted all over the country, to be killed by a bear almost in sight of home!”

At this moment he heard a welcome sound, the loud barking of a dog. Out from the northern woods rushed old Bose, flying at the bear with a fury which successfully diverted her attention from Aaron, giving him a chance to reload his gun and fire again. This time he skilfully aimed below her shoulder, hitting the heart.

The bear rolled over and lay stretched out on the ground, dead. Old Bose was nearly frantic with joy between this unexpected meeting with his well-loved young master and the downfall of his enemy, and flew back and forth from Aaron to the prostrate bear, barking wildly, feeling, if only he could have spoken:

“We killed her, did n’t we, Aaron?”

“You helped, any way, old boy. I don’t know how I should have come out if you had n’t arrived in the nick of time,” said Aaron, patting

Bose's head as he answered the dog's unspoken thought, glad to hear his own voice again after the long, solitary day.

"Are you out hunting all by yourself, Bose?" asked Aaron.

But here the dog ran barking towards the woods, to greet Titus King and Sylvanus, and escort them proudly to Aaron and the dead bear.

Having heard Aaron's gun in the distance, the young men had advanced cautiously through the woods to reconnoitre. Great was their surprise and delight to meet Aaron so unexpectedly.

The three skinned the bear and took home all the meat they could carry. The rest they bound up in bundles with strips of stout moose-wood bark, and tied high up in the branches of a staddle which they bent over to receive its burden, and then let snap back upright again.

"There," said Titus, "now no wolves or foxes will eat up our bear's meat in the night, and to-morrow we will come back for the rest. That was a stroke of real luck, Aaron. Bear meat is as good as pork. Your mother's pork barrel is getting low, she has had to entertain so many soldiers, first and last. I should n't wonder if she salted down some of this bear meat."

"But now, Aaron, tell us all about your scouting," said Sylvanus, eager to hear his brother's experiences.

"That's a long story, Sylvanus," said Aaron. "I expect I shall be telling it, off and on, for the next month, until every one is tired of hearing it."

Aaron was received home with the greatest joy by his parents and sisters, and that night all sat up later than usual by the fireside listening with eager interest to the tale of Aaron's experiences, and his description of the different forts and people he had seen.

"You have had a chance to see and learn much," said his father, "and, as long as you are safely returned, I am glad you could have the experience. We have some news for you too."

"News?" said Aaron.

"Yes. That new fort north of us is being built now, I suppose; the one we began work on last fall."

"Who is doing the work?"

"The soldiers from Fort Shirley, under Lieutenant Catlin, in the absence of Captain Williams."

"I thought we were going to build that fort, father."

"Colonel Stoddard is in great haste to have it completed without delay. He sent a messenger here with a letter to me, while you were away, asking if I could have the fort done in ten days' time. Of course that was impossible, and so I wrote him on the messenger's return. But I told him he was welcome to use the logs we had cut and drawn together. I will gladly contribute that much towards it."

"We can well afford to do that," said Aaron. "That certainly is the best of news."

"Your mother begins to sleep better nights already, since she has known the fort was actually being built."

"I shall sleep better now that I know my boy is safely under his father's roof again," said his mother, looking at her son with loving eyes. "To think of your sleeping outdoors on the snow!"

Towards the last of April, Captain Rice said:

"I believe I will ride up to the new fort and see how it is progressing. It is a matter of the utmost importance to us."

The new fort was about four and a half miles north of Captain Rice's house. On his return all gathered around, interested to hear his report.

"The fort is nearly done; in fact, is all done,

except a few last details," said the captain with an air of satisfaction. "They have made better progress than I thought possible in the time. 'Fort Pelham,'<sup>1</sup> Captain Williams calls it; and he has named the big brook flowing near, 'Pelham Brook.' You know that the fort is built to prevent the Indians' access to the Deerfield down this brook."

"Why did he call it Fort Pelham?" asked Dinah.

"In honor of Lord Henry Pelham of England, brother of the Duke of Newcastle, who is now First Lord of the Treasury," said Captain Rice. "Fort Pelham is not built like Fort Shirley. It is a stockade."

"How is it built?" asked Aaron, especially interested, as he had helped begin the work.

"The soldiers dug a trench a foot deep or so around the four sides, enclosing about an acre and a half of land there on the hillside looking down on Pelham Brook."

"Yes, I remember the lay of the land," said Aaron.

"They've set posts down closely side by side in this trench, spiking them tightly together, then throwing the earth back around the posts, so they have a stout, high palisade, that it will

<sup>1</sup> In Rowe, Mass.

bother the Indians not a little to get over. There is only one entrance, on the north side. They are busy now digging a well in the centre of the parade ground; expected to strike water to-day."

"Have n't they built any houses?" asked Mrs. Rice.

"Oh, yes, I forgot to mention those. They have built several little houses against the inside walls of the stockade with salt-box roofs, enough to accommodate the garrison. They hope to have twenty men stationed there within a month."

"I am so glad you rode up there to bring back such good news," said Mrs. Rice.

As the summer went on the Rices had considerable communication with Fort Pelham. Soldiers and messengers going to or from Deerfield with supplies for the fort usually stopped over night at Captain Rice's.

One day late in June, Lieut. John Catlin, escorted by several soldiers, appeared at the captain's, having come down from Fort Shirley by way of Fort Pelham.

"Any news at the forts, Lieutenant?" was Captain Rice's first question.

"Big news," said Catlin. "We are going to have a new commander of the line of forts."

"Why, what has become of Capt. William Williams?" asked the captain in surprise.

"He has gone off in the expedition to Cape Breton. It is no secret now that Governor Shirley is trying to take Louisburg."

"No. I have heard about it by way of Deerfield," said the captain.

"Captain Williams enlisted seventy-four men in six days' time, and marched off with them to Boston. The governor has given him a lieutenant-colonel's commission, and he will sail for Louisburg forthwith."

"Captain Williams will do good work wherever he goes. But who succeeds him as commander of the line of forts?"

"His second cousin, Capt. Ephraim Williams. I understand that Major Israel Williams of Hatfield puts him forward."

"I hope he will make good the place of his cousin, Capt. William Williams," said Captain Rice.

"He promises well. He is a young man, barely thirty-one. Those who know him say he is both brave and energetic. He comes of the best stock, the old Williams family. But there is other news that will interest you even more, perhaps. Another fort is to be built soon, over to the west of you."

"Where?" asked Rice eagerly.

"Over Hoosac Mountain, on Hoosac River."

"It seems a strange place to locate a fort, way off there, over that great mountain, in the wilderness," said Rice.

"Capt. William Williams planned it. He thinks that a fort there will intercept the old Mohawk trail running from Hoosac Mountain, down the Cold River, to Deerfield River. The Indians have travelled that trail no one knows how long, but long before we English ever came here. The fort is to be built to command the ford where the old trail crosses Hoosac River, and it will serve another good purpose. It will show the Dutch in New York province that they can no longer encroach on our western boundary; that Massachusetts province is determined stoutly to hold and defend her own territory."

"That is true," said Rice.

"We are now going to work on the trail up Cold River and over the mountain, to try and make it passable for horses," said Lieutenant Catlin. "No doubt you will see all you want to of us, Captain, during the summer, while this work is going on."

"Our latchstring is always out, especially for those working in our defence," said Captain Rice heartily.

That evening he was glad to discuss with Lieutenant Catlin the siege of Louisburg. All New England now knew this to be the object of Governor Shirley's secret expedition, which had sailed from Boston in April. It was the one engrossing topic everywhere.

"What do you think about the siege of Louisburg, Lieutenant?" asked the captain as they sat out under the buttonball tree enjoying, after a very warm day, the cool evening breeze and sweet air. Tamar and Artemas were amusing themselves catching fireflies. The rest were glad to listen to the talk.

"It seems to me our men have undertaken a big job, too big in fact," continued the captain. "Louisburg has always been considered the strongest fortress on this side the Atlantic. I feel rather blue about the outlook, I confess. I hope Governor Shirley has not made a mistake."

"The governor knows pretty well what he is undertaking, I guess," said Catlin. "Perhaps you know that our men and officers, captured at Canso, were held captive at Louisburg all summer, then sent down to Boston on parole last fall. It is supposed to be information about the state of the garrison, etc., at Louisburg given the governor by these captives which put him on this attempt,"

"That alters the case," said Rice.

"Capt. Ephraim Williams stopped in Northampton on his way to Fort Shirley," continued Catlin, "and he says that most hopeful news has recently been received there, greatly rejoicing the town. All Northampton is engaged with much concern for this expedition. Special prayer meetings are held there weekly that Providence may order the affair successfully."

"A most excellent plan," said Rice. "But what is this latest news?"

"Major Seth Pomeroy of Northampton is out on this expedition, as you may have heard."

"Yes, and a fine man for it too."

"His wife has lately received a letter from him, saying that the expedition landed at Louisburg the first of May. They found the harbor defended, not only by the stone fortress, but by a royal battery on the shore, having a moat and bastions, and also by another battery situated on an island. But our men were not dismayed. No sooner did their vessels come in sight of the city than they let down their whaleboats, manned by some of our bold fishermen from Marblehead, and rushed ashore. The French soldiers who came down to prevent their landing were put to flight, driven back into the woods."

“Good! You don’t say so!” exclaimed the captain, while the boys’ eyes shone at hearing the valor of their countrymen, and Artemas let the fireflies go unmolested, absorbed in Lieutenant Catlin’s story.

“Pomeroy wrote that the next day four hundred of our men under William Vaughan, a New Hampshire volunteer, marched by the city, giving three rousing cheers as they passed, and posted themselves near the northeast harbor. The French in the royal battery were panic-stricken at this, and abandoned it that very night, first being careful to spike all their cannon to spoil them for our use.”

“A shame!” said the captain.

“Oh, that did n’t do them much good! The next morning boats filled with French soldiers came down from the city to recover the battery, but Vaughan and thirteen of his men withstood them on the beach, and kept them from landing until Pepperell was able to send reinforcements. So our men still held that royal battery at last accounts. It had thirty large cannon, and Major Seth Pomeroy, who, as you know, is a gunsmith by trade —”

“Yes, yes,” said the eager captain.

“— was put in charge of twenty smiths, who came forward from among the volunteers, to

drill out the cannon, so that soon our men were able to turn those thirty French cannon against the city and the battery on the island, answering their fire royally."

"Grand, grand!" exclaimed the captain, rubbing his hands with delight. "The best news I've heard in a long time. If our men go on like this, they'll soon make mince meat of those Frenchmen."

"Well, I don't know about that. Major Pomeroy writes that Louisburg is a strong place, appears indeed impregnable, and it looks to him as if the campaign would be a long one. But he says he is willing to stay until God's time comes to deliver the city into our hands."

"He is right. The matter is at the disposal of a Mightier Power than ours," said the captain reverently. "But I am overjoyed to hear this glorious news you bring. It looks as if the French would have enough to do at home, without raiding on us. But it is time for prayers and to bed if, as I suppose, you and your men will want to make an early start to-morrow morning."

"Yes, we must be off at crack of day."

## CHAPTER XIV.

### THE COLD RIVER TRAIL.

**D**URING the following month Lieutenant Catlin and his men occasionally came back over the mountain to Captain Rice's for supplies as they worked on the trail, and the Rices kept in close touch with the work so interesting to them, upon which they felt their future safety largely depended.

It seemed then, as it seems now, a most heroic undertaking for a small body of men to venture into the unbroken wilderness many miles, over a high mountain, through a country even at this day wild and picturesque in the extreme, through a forest alive with fierce wild beasts, to erect a fort in a spot so remote and almost inaccessible. The site selected for the fort was thirty-six miles from Deerfield, with Hoosac Mountain lying between it, and Captain Rice's, fourteen miles away, the only house or little spot of civilization between the fort and Deerfield, its base of supplies.

But, undismayed, the little party worked on,

and at last camped in the woods on the western side of Hoosac Mountain, in the meadows on the banks of Hoosac River, under the shadow of the great mountains rising grandly all around. About the middle of July, 1746, they began cutting down the huge primeval trees covering the spot selected for the fort. Lieutenant Catlin felt himself fortunate to be able to command the services of John Perry, a carpenter from Falltown, who had aided in building Fort Shirley.

One day, towards the last of July, Captain Rice said to his sons:

"To-morrow, boys, if the weather is good, you must ride to Deerfield for provisions. It is some time since Catlin's men have been over for supplies, and they are sure to be here before long. Capt. Elijah Williams is commissary for all the forts, and you must go to his store."

"I wish you would let me go too, father," said Artemas. "I'm eleven years old now. I can manage a horse just as well as Sylvanus. Can't I go, father?"

"Artemas!" exclaimed his mother. "Are you crazy to think of such a thing?"

"You do well for your age, my son," said his father, "but it would not be best for you to

take this trip. But this afternoon, if you work smartly hoeing this morning, you and I will go out hunting."

"Good!" said Artemas, his disappointed face brightening at once. "I'll hoe like — a beaver. Can I take your other gun, Aaron?"

"Yes, if father will be responsible for it and you."

"As if I did n't know how to handle a gun!" exclaimed Artemas.

Mrs. Rice suffered untold agonies that afternoon when she saw the small Artemas proudly marching off for the woods at his father's heels, a loaded gun as long as himself over his shoulder. Sighing heavily, she said to Dinah:

"His father says he must learn to use a gun and hunt, and I suppose he must. I only hope he will not shoot himself or some one else while he is learning."

When the hunters returned at night bringing a deerskin and a load of venison, and Artemas, almost too proud to be approached, with a large wild turkey dangling by its legs from his gunstock, a turkey he himself had brought down, Mrs. Rice was more resigned. Captain Rice did not mention that as Artemas was climbing over a log in the rear of his father, carelessly holding his gun with the muzzle

pointing forward, it accidentally went off, the bullet grazing his father's ear. Captain Rice then and there emphatically expounded the law of gun-carrying in the woods, and Artemas learned one lesson in woodcraft that he never forgot.

The next day after the departure of the young men for Deerfield, towards night, Tamar sat out under the buttonball tree with the sheet she was turning, that she might be the first to see their approach. As the sun sank low over the western hills she saw the heavily laden horses coming in sight, and called to Dinah, sitting at the front window:

"Here they come at last, Dinah."

Both girls ran down to meet their brothers and uncle, closely followed by Artemas and Bose, the dog barking loudly from joy and excitement. Mrs. Rice came out, and the captain, busy in the meadow below the house, hastened up to greet the boys and hear what tidings they had brought.

"Hurrah! Hurrah!" cried Sylvanus, waving his cap above his head, as they rode near.

"Hurrah, father! Louisburg is taken!"

"You don't mean it!" cried the captain.

"When? How? Tell us all about it."

"It was the first thing we heard when we

reached Deerfield. All the men were gathered at Captain Williams's store talking it over."

"The fort surrendered the 17th of June; fort, batteries, city, and all," burst in Aaron, anxious to tell part of this great news.

"The news did n't reach Boston till the 3d of July," resumed Sylvanus, as Aaron stopped to take breath. "All the bells in town were rung."

"The people nearly went wild with joy," said Titus.

"No wonder," said the captain. "Thank the Lord!"

"Captain Williams sent you up a late number of the *News Letter*, giving all the particulars," said Aaron.

"This is indeed great and glorious news," said the captain. "Where is the *News Letter*?"

Seating himself on the doorsteps, the captain plunged eagerly into the paper, his head buried in its folds, while the boys were unloading, and passing over letters and various parcels to their mother and the girls of absorbing interest to them.

"Listen to this, mother," said the captain, presently reading aloud. "'From a letter written home by one of our officers. 'God has gone

out of the way of his common providence in a remarkable and almost miraculous manner, to incline the hearts of the French to give up and deliver this strong city into our hands.'""

"How true that is!" said Mrs. Rice. "Do you think this will hasten the end of the war, Moses?"

"Well, I don't know. I should suppose it must, but I see another writer in this paper takes a gloomy view; thinks the French will put forth greater efforts than ever to regain Louisburg and to press the war home to us in this country."

"I am all the more glad the new fort is being built. That will certainly help protect us here."

"It will be a strong defence to us," said the captain.

But the boys brought other news from Deerfield not so gratifying, which Aaron told his father later that evening when they were out at the barn.

"We heard some sorrowful news, father," said Aaron. "The Indian troubles are beginning again. They've had word at Deerfield that, on July 5, young William Phipps was slain by them, up at Great Meadow. You know I met Phipps when I was out on my scout. We had much kindness from him and his young

wife. Poor girl, I pity her and her two little ones!"

"I am very sorry to hear this," said the captain. "How did it happen?"

"Phipps was hoeing out in his cornfield, not far from the fort, when suddenly two Indians came upon him and dragged him off about half a mile into the woods. Phipps was a young fellow full of pluck; you could see that to look at him. He made a brave struggle for life and almost escaped. One of the Indians went back for something he had dropped. Phipps saw his chance, and fell upon the other Indian with his hoe, disabling him. Then, seizing that Indian's gun, he shot the other Indian as he came back, and started on a run for the fort. But unluckily on the way he met three more Indians of the same band, who caught poor Phipps, killed and scalped him."

"Too bad, too bad," said the captain, with troubled face. "Such a gallant young life lost in its prime! I am most sorry to hear this."

"A little later," continued Aaron, "a band of Indians, supposed to be the same party, captured Deacon Josiah Fisher at Upper Ashuelot as he was driving his cows to pasture, killing and scalping him."

"This shows the need of always being on our

guard. Did you hear what action the government has taken?"

"Capt. Ebenezer Alexander of Northfield has lately returned from serving in the army at Louisburg. Since his return he has enlisted a company of fifty-six volunteers in this county, to be subject to the government's call. He and his company have been ordered out, and are to be kept on duty constantly, scouting in the woods, and guarding the most exposed places to the north."

"I am glad you did not tell the women this bad news," said the captain.

"We agreed, coming home," said Aaron, "to say nothing about this before the women."

Not long after this the Rices were much surprised to see a small herd of strange cattle coming up the path towards their house. Riding behind them were Ebenezer Arms, his young cousin, Phineas Arms, and Salah Barnard of Deerfield.

The Rices knew most of the Deerfield people, indeed considered themselves as belonging to that town, where they were obliged to go both to mill and to meeting, and so were glad to see these friends. The cattle were driven into the stockade for the night, while the young men took their seats at the supper table. Mrs. Rice was now well aware that she must always be

prepared for sudden arrivals, and the supper was ample and satisfying.

"Of course you are bound for the new fort," said Captain Rice.

"Yes, we are driving up these beef creatures for Col. Israel Williams. He is sending them up to help provision the fort," said Arms.

"A pretty tough job you have in hand," said the captain.

"We have not had much trouble so far," said Arms. "But I expect we shall need more help for the rest of the way. As I have never been over this trail, I hoped you would let one of your sons go along to help us."

"I know the trail, father," said Sylvanus eagerly. "I went far up on the mountain, you know, with Lieutenant Catlin last June. Can I go?"

"Why yes, if you are needed, I am willing."

So it was settled, to Sylvanus's joy and his mother's manifest uneasiness, that he was to start off with the Deerfield men early the next morning.

In the cool, pleasant dawn of the summer morning the party started. Under Sylvanus's lead, they followed up the Deerfield River for about four miles, then forded the stream a little below the mouth of Cold River.

"We turn off here and follow this other stream up into the hills," said Sylvanus, slipping down from his horse, to aid the others in heading the cattle in the right direction.

"So this is Cold River," said Arms. "It is a wild stream," he added, looking at the river, whose clear waters brawled noisily and swiftly down over the great stones filling its bed,—stones washed down from the mountain-sides above in bygone storms and freshets.

"Cold River's a lively stream, and so you will think when you come to ford it, as we must soon," said Sylvanus.

True to his prediction, the high hills soon came so close to the bed of the stream that the trail was forced to cross to the opposite shore. The cattle, urged from behind, plunged in and struggled through the swift, rushing waters, one steer stumbling on a big stone and falling, but quickly struggling to its feet again, and plunging on, scrambled up the steep farther bank to join its fellows.

"Not very sure footing for horses in there," said Arms, hesitating and looking dubiously on the rushing current.

"The only way is to manage as Lieutenant Catlin did," said Sylvanus. "He only let his horse take one step, then made her stop. Then

another step, then stop. By this means his horse did n't lose its head and get frightened. Like this."

Sylvanus started White Dolly into the stream. As she began to plunge among the stones he said, "Whoa, Dolly," patting her neck reassuringly. Then shaking the reins, "Get up, Dolly," and Dolly took another step, confident in her kind rider's care. Another halt, another step or two, and soon Dolly was scrambling nervously up the bank after the cattle, that were improving the halt to graze on the wild grass growing rankly among the ferns and bushes beside the trail. The others followed Sylvanus's example, and crossed the ford in safety.

Salah Barnard looked up at the steep mountain walls rising high, almost perpendicularly, each side of them, clothed with forest, largely of evergreen trees. High up above the mountain summits was the blue summer sky with white clouds floating over, and down below, as the trail ascended, he saw Cold River rushing along at the bottom of the narrow cleft it seemed to have worn between the mountains.

"It looks, Sylvanus, as if we were walled in, could not get out," he said.

"The trail runs along on the side of the

mountain until we reach the summit. It is the old Indian trail. Here's Indian Spring now, the place where the Indians were wont to camp in the old days. Do you see that tree trunk there, all scarred with arrow marks? They used it for a target."

Indian Spring's clear waters tempted the men to stop and drink. Phineas Arms, rambling about the little opening in the woods while they halted, said, as he stooped to pick up something:

"Here's an Indian tomahawk. Perhaps there are Indians around."

All examined the tomahawk closely.

"It's a bit rusty. I think it is an old one; has lain here some time," said Ebenezer Arms. "But, all the same, I am glad we shall make the fort to-night."

As the trail mounted higher it became like a narrow shelf trodden into the steep mountain-side. Far, far below ran the waters of Cold River in their narrow gorge, and strange mountain tops began to peer up all around, some close by, some blue in the distance.

Here an accident befell the party. One of the steers lost his footing in the narrow, rocky path, and slid off, rolling over and over down the steep mountain-side, life dashed out of his

body ere it rested at last against a tree root at bottom of the ravine, far below.

"A warning to us all," said Arms. "Keep your eye on your horses' footing, boys, and a tight hand on the bridle."

At last they reached the summit.<sup>1</sup> The rocky path went on, up and down hill through unbroken woods for two or three miles, until late in the afternoon, when the riders came out on a bare, rocky projection, where only a few straggling pines, their roots forcing their way into crevices, hung trembling over the precipice below.

Sylvanus, who was ahead, halted.

"There is where the fort is, over there," he said, pointing west. "Don't you see a break in the woods over in that hollow, at the foot of yonder great hill?"

"Yes, and I believe I see smoke rising," said Arms, shading his eyes from the afternoon sun, which shone directly in his face.

"That is from the new fort then," said Sylvanus.

"What an isolated place to plant a fort!" exclaimed Arms. "I've heard about it, but I never fully realized the situation until now."

Down below them the men saw a deep valley,

<sup>1</sup> In Florida, Mass.

so surrounded on all sides by high mountain ranges and peaks that it seemed almost like a hollow green cup sunk down among the hills. The fort was located at the bottom of this cup. Around it towered the Greylock and Taconic ranges, the Housatonic and Green Mountains, with Hoosac Mountain to the east. Primeval forest covered densely hill and valley as far as the eye could reach, save for the slight break made by the little clearing around the fort.

"It is time we were pushing on, if we would reach the fort before nightfall," said Arms, after a short halt.

The trail zigzagged down the steep western side of the mountain, reaching the valley below at last.

Following a branch of the Hoosac River, they soon struck the main stream, and ere long came to the spot where the trail crossed the Hoosac at a shallow ford.

"This is the old Indian ford," said Sylvanus. "There's the fort now. It was placed there to command the trail and this ford."

Night was falling as they rode slowly on their tired horses through the meadow set thickly with tree stumps to the spot where the walls of the new fort were rising, it being about half built. The great mountains loomed, vast and

grand, around the little clearing, and the solitude, the silence and wildness so impressed Salah Barnard that he said in low tone to Sylvanus:

“A lonely, fearsome place. I can but be glad that we tarry here only one night.”

## CHAPTER XV.

### AT FORT MASSACHUSETTS.

LIEUTENANT CATLIN and his men received the new arrivals with a delight only possible to those far from home, in such lonely and dangerous surroundings, glad of all the news, the letters and papers they brought.

When Ebenezer Arms told Catlin of the killing of Phipps and Foster by the Indians, Catlin said:

“We had the news only yesterday.”

“Yesterday!” exclaimed Arms. “How was that possible? We met no one on the trail.”

“We had it from a strange source,” replied Catlin. “An Indian from Crown Point came in here yesterday. You know the French stole a march on our government. They slipped up the lake and clapped up a fort at Crown Point, which they call St. Frederick, thus securing the control of Lake Champlain. We have heard that there are many Caghnawagas there. I strongly suspect that this Indian was sent by the French to spy out our new fort, though he pretended that he was out hunting, and had

come on us by chance, not knowing that a fort was building here."

"A lie, of course. He was no doubt a French spy," said Arms.

"He told us all about this affair at Great Meadow, and said that one of the skulks that killed Phipps received his death wound in the struggle, and died soon after reaching Fort Frederick."

"Served him right," said Arms. "I must say, Lieutenant, I am much struck with your hazardous situation. Here you are, far from any possible reinforcements, out full front to the French and Indians, and pretty near the Dutch too. I suppose our government built this fort here partly to defend this part of our province from the encroachments of the Dutch."

"No doubt," said Catlin. "It is to be called Fort Massachusetts, as if to let the New York Dutch know that this is our boundary. It is quite time something was done, for the Albany Dutch are creeping up the Hoosac this way, nearer and nearer. I've had some dealings with one Van Ness, who lives down below us on the Hoosac, at the junction of the Walloomsac."

"Do you think it right or safe to encourage them in that manner?"

"I have little choice. The care of the work at the fort here, and getting the provisions and stores needed, is hard work, really more than one man can do. The Dutch are eager to trade with me, offer me favorable terms; and I find it far easier to deal with them than to go over the mountain to Deerfield."

"That trip over Hoosac Mountain is no easy thing, as I can testify," said Arms.

"We are all well, so far, thank God, and in good spirits," added Catlin. "I send out scouts every day, even as far as to Pontoosuc, but as yet have made no discovery of the enemy. But I shall keep up the scouting daily, winter and summer."

"It is our only safeguard," said Arms.

Arms and his party retraced their steps over Hoosac Mountain the following day, reaching Captain Rice's without special adventure, save the killing of a fat bear on the Cold River trail. Sylvanus now had stories to tell as well as Aaron, details of Fort Massachusetts and the doings there, full of interest to the Rices.

The rest of the summer passed away quietly, with no attacks from the enemy, although not without much anxiety and watchfulness at all the outlying forts and little settlements. Constant scouting was kept up.

Captain Rice's house was so frequently visited by soldiers and scouts, going to and fro from Forts Shirley and Pelham to Fort Massachusetts and back, that the family lost their earlier sense of loneliness and seclusion, and felt much more secure than formerly.

About the middle of October, however, this sense of security was rudely shaken by news brought in by John Perry who, with an escort of soldiers, had been down to Deerfield for carpenters' supplies needed at Fort Massachusetts.

"Bad news, Captain," said Perry. "The Indians are on the warpath again. The Deerfield people were much excited last week Saturday afternoon when a man rode in from the north, bringing word that the Indians had appeared that morning at Great Meadow, slaying David Rugg, a Deerfield man, and capturing and carrying off Nehemiah Howe."

"Nehemiah Howe! What a pity! I remember him well," said Aaron.

"How did it happen?" asked Captain Rice. "Were the people careless, off guard?"

"No Indians had been seen around there for a long time, and Howe thought he was perfectly safe. He only went out to cut some wood, about forty rods from the fort, in plain view of

the sentry stationed up in the mount. The sentry told Deacon Wright that the first he saw, Howe was running for his life toward the fort, chased by eight naked Indians. They gained on Howe, who, seeing that they would catch him, stopped and threw up his hands in sign of surrender, and three savages at once seized him. The sentry and others fired from the fort, killing one of his captors, mortally wounding another, and sending a bullet through the powder horn of the third Indian. But it was useless. More Indians swarmed out of the woods, and they bore poor Howe<sup>1</sup> away."

This disaster alarmed the whole province. Small bodies of soldiers were posted at all the forts. Major Edward Hartwell and his company of soldiers were sent to garrison Northfield through the winter, and the government sent three hundred pairs of snowshoes to Hampshire County<sup>2</sup> for the use of the scouts, who were constantly kept out.

Early in December, one snowy day, Tamar, peering out the eastern window through the white flakes flying in a wild whirl through the air, said:

<sup>1</sup> Nehemiah Howe was never redeemed, but died at Quebec, May 25, 1747.

<sup>2</sup> Hampshire County, at this time, included all of Massachusetts west of the Connecticut.

"Mother, I really believe some one is coming. I am sure I see something moving down the path, through the snow."

All the family hastened to look out. Through the driving mist of snowflakes gradually appeared the forms of several men, shaggy white with snow, slowly toiling along on snowshoes.

"Well, I must say I didn't expect any one from outside to-day, of all days," said Mrs. Rice. "I have plenty of salt pork and bear meat on hand, that's one comfort. I wonder who they can be!"

As the men came up on the steps, stamping and brushing off the snow and loosening their snowshoe thongs, they proved to be old acquaintance, Sergt. John Hawks from Deerfield, with his two nephews, Gershom and Eleazer Hawks, Joseph Petty, Zebulon Allen, and several other young men from Deerfield and Falltown.

"Well, Mrs. Rice," said Hawks, "you see you are never safe from invasions, even in such a storm as this. The enemy may be upon you at any moment, ready to eat you out of house and home."

"We are always glad to see any one from Deerfield, or any of our brave defenders," said Mrs. Rice cordially.

"And we are glad enough to make this comfortable port in such a storm," said Hawks. "We will stay here until it abates if you can accommodate us, as it would be sheer rashness to venture over the Cold River trail in such a storm."

"It would be almost certain death," said Captain Rice, who had come in from the corn-house on seeing the arrival. "What takes you to Fort Massachusetts at this season of the year?"

"We go up to help garrison it through the winter. Capt. Ephraim Williams plans to keep about fifty men there. A part will be out all the time scouting, while part must always be on hand to guard the fort against possible surprise."

"A wise precaution, though I hardly think the enemy will be around before spring."

"Nor do I," said Hawks. "But we must remember the assault on Deerfield in February, 1704, when every one felt safe because it was winter."

Sergt. John Hawks was now to take charge of Fort Massachusetts, under Capt. Ephraim Williams, who was commander of the whole line of forts along the northwest border. Sergeant Hawks was a man in whose courage and ability

much confidence was felt. Like many men of those troubled times, he had grown up in an atmosphere of war, and been engaged in military service much of his life. He came of war-like stock. His father and his uncle John were soldiers in the fight of Turners Falls, and his uncle distinguished himself at the attack on Hatfield during King Philip's War.<sup>1</sup>

Sergeant Hawks was over six feet tall, spare yet muscular, full of vigor, with dark complexion and heavy eyebrows turning slightly upwards, giving his face a somewhat fierce expression when he was excited, and many traditions were current of his daring.

His whole appearance and bearing were such as to inspire confidence in his friends and fear in his foes. He was a man of indomitable energy, of much practical ability and resource, and also of deep and sincere piety; and Captain Rice felt that Captain Williams had chosen wisely in appointing him to take charge of the exposed and important post at Fort Massachusetts. As they talked that evening he asked:

"What do you feel, Sergeant, is our outlook for next summer? Do you not think the French will attempt to make reprisals on us for the capture of Louisburg?"

<sup>1</sup> See "Young Puritans in Captivity," page 24.

"That is the general feeling," said Hawks; "and our government is preparing for them all along the line."

While the elders talked thus in the living-room, the young people gathered around the kitchen fireplace, visiting, and watching Artemas, who was popping corn in the warming-pan. As Gershom Hawks patted the head of Bose, he asked:

"What has become of your pet coon, Artemas? Tumbler, I think you called him."

"I don't know. He went off last summer," said Artemas.

"Tumbler became a great nuisance at last," said Sylvanus. "He was perfectly tame, and ran all over the house, having outgrown his pen, and making his home up in the buttonball tree. He was a little thief. He had a way of finding the sugar box, and dipping his paw into it, that mother did not altogether enjoy. But when, night after night, some of our best spring chickens disappeared, and feathers and bones were found suspiciously near the foot of Tumbler's tree, why, soon after that Tumbler disappeared for good."

"Oh, I see!" said Gershom, exchanging significant glances with Sylvanus, while Artemas shook his warming-pan over the coals, unconscious.

All through that long, severe winter, garrisons of men lived at Forts Shirley, Pelham, and Massachusetts, remote on their hills in the woods, keeping up constant scouting between the forts and over the adjacent country.

Capt. Ephraim Williams, a man who had grown up and been educated in Newton, Mass., who for a number of years when young had followed the sea, making several voyages to Europe, visiting England, Spain, and Holland, a man thirty-one years old, in the prime of life, fond of books and social intercourse, passed the long, cold winter on the windy hill top in the forest at Fort Shirley, looking after the well-being of the three hundred and fifty men under his command in the line of border forts.

Perchance, on some wild night, when the storm blew roughly around the isolated fort, and the wind howled drearily down the stone chimney as he sat by the rude fireplace, into the mind of this young man came the thought of that benefaction which has meant so much to many young men in later years. Great thoughts are often born of solitude, silence, loneliness.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### WAR IN EARNEST.

THE new year, 1746, opened peacefully to all seeming. Yet it was a year destined before its close to be fraught with momentous consequences to many persons.

Soon after the ground was bare in the spring, the Rices had an unusual excitement in the arrival of a large party on horseback which included several women and children, the first women (except those of the Rice family) who had ever appeared in Charlemont, as Boston Township No. 1 was now called.

One family was that of John Smead. John Smead belonged to the old Smead family of Deerfield. With four other young men, Smead had begun a settlement in 1735 on the Pequayag River at the place now called Athol, but when the war broke out, and the call came for men to garrison the forts, had enlisted and served until recently at Fort Shirley. Now he was going to Fort Massachusetts, taking his whole family with him.

His two stalwart young sons, John, Jr., aged twenty, and Daniel, aged nineteen, had also enlisted as soldiers at Fort Massachusetts. With Smead were his wife, two boys, Reuben and Simon, aged eleven and nine, and Mary, a little girl of six.

Moses Scott of Falltown was taking with him to the fort his wife, Miriam, and their two little boys, Ebenezer and Moses. Rebecca, wife of John Perry, was also of the party, on her way to join her husband at Fort Massachusetts.

As this company and their escorts alighted from their horses under the buttonball tree, Mrs. Rice and her daughters hastened to welcome the women, who, though strong and vigorous, as they needed to be to undertake such a journey, were lame and tired after the weary jolting up hill from Deerfield.

"Is it possible," asked Mrs. Rice, "that you women are really going to venture over Hoosac Mountain to dwell at Fort Massachusetts, taking your children with you, and when every one thinks we are likely to have fighting ere long?"

"It is hardly a matter of choice with us," said Mrs. Smead. "Where our husbands are, there is home and there is our place to be."

"It is far better," said Mrs. Scott, "to be with them, to know and share the worst, and

perhaps be able to help them, than to be living back in the settlements, unable to hear from them perhaps for months, imagining the worst."

"Yes, they might be dead and buried before we should even hear of it," said Mrs. Perry.

"We can be of real use at the fort, in cooking, and nursing the sick," said Mrs. Smead; "so we do not feel that we shall be mere cumberers of the ground."

"No one would imagine that for a moment who saw you," said Mrs. Rice, looking with respect on these strong, resolute young women who were venturing on such hardships and exposure to share their husbands' lot. "But it seems a little hard to take young children there."

"Oh, we want to go!" said little Simon Smead.

"We are going to be soldiers ourselves just as soon as we are sixteen years old," said Reuben.

"Maybe father will let me fire off his gun," added Simon.

Mrs. Rice laughed at this warlike spirit of the youngsters, and took the women in to rest. The little boys began to scamper about, exploring this new place, while the men were putting out the horses.

"Boys, boys!" called Captain Rice after them.

"Don't go far from the house. Don't go up on the hill, towards the woods. You must keep near the house."

"I'll keep an eye on them, father," said Sylvanus, pleased to see so many children at their isolated home.

That evening after supper, when all the tired children were fast asleep, Mrs. Smead told Mrs. Rice:

"I think we women were perhaps made braver to go over to Fort Massachusetts by the example of Mrs. Norton. Have you heard that she has lately gone from her father's home in Springfield out to Fort Shirley to join her husband, the Rev. John Norton? You doubtless know that he has been appointed chaplain of the whole line of forts."

"And we have a doctor too, now," added Mrs. Perry. "Dr. Thomas Williams of Deerfield, brother of Capt. Ephraim Williams, has lately been appointed doctor and surgeon for all the forts along the border, with his headquarters at Fort Shirley with his brother."

"We heard of these two appointments but recently," said Mrs. Rice. "The captain is especially pleased to have a godly minister residing in this section, and I as delighted to have a good doctor near. We hope to entertain

them often as they ride from fort to fort. Has Mrs. Norton joined her husband?"

"She has gone up to Fort Shirley, taking with her their four young children. She will make her home at Fort Shirley, it being her husband's headquarters, though he will go from fort to fort in turn."

"Mrs. Norton must be a very brave woman to venture up there to dwell, with her children, and no other woman within reach."

"You know Rev. John Norton was our minister at Falltown for a year or two," said Mrs. Smead. "His two youngest children were born there. So we know him and his wife well. And when we heard that Mrs. Norton had ventured out to Fort Shirley to live, we women felt moved to imitate her example and follow our husbands. So now we are on our way to Fort Massachusetts, which, God willing, we shall reach to-morrow night."

The next morning the company set out for the Cold River trail over Hoosac Mountain. The children rode on pillions behind their parents, or on the saddle in front. Their round, chubby faces were bright and smiling. They had enjoyed their stop at the friendly Rices', and Mrs. Rice and the girls had added some tempting caraway-seed cookies and other

goodies expressly for them to the luncheons their mothers carried. The sun shone cheerfully, making green the bare, brown meadows, the birds were chirping and twittering, and the whole world, this bright spring morning, seemed full of life and hope.

"Good-bye, Tamar," called little Mary. "Come over to the fort some time and see me."

"Maybe I can, some time when the boys are going over," said Tamar.

"Oh, do you visit the fort, Sylvanus?" asked Reuben. "Then we shall see you again."

"I hope so, I'm sure," said Sylvanus.

Only a few days after this the Rices had news from Deerfield that Indian depredations were already beginning on the frontier. They heard that, on April 19, three men who were going out from No. 4 with a team of oxen to the gristmill, at some distance from the fort, were suddenly beset by a party of French and Indians under De Niverville. The oxen were killed, and the men carried off captive, among them being Stephen Farnsworth, one of the three first settlers who had ventured up to No. 4 from Lunenburg. The enemy had also burned both the grist and saw mills, a grievous loss to such a remote settlement.

"Well, they are at work, it seems," said

Captain Rice, when he heard this news. "I knew the French would endeavor to make reprisals this summer for the loss of Louisburg. This is only the beginning of troubles, I fear."

On learning of this attack on No. 4, the General Court at once raised several regiments of volunteers, sending one hundred and seventy-eight men to the western forts, in addition to nearly a hundred of the people of this section who had enlisted, dividing these men among the different forts.

From every part of the western border now began to come tales of loss and disaster. April 23, Upper Ashuelot was attacked and Nathan Blake taken captive. In early May attacks were made at No. 4, and again at the Ashuelots, and several persons slain or captured. Evidently many bands of French and Indians were out, determined if possible to destroy the border forts, thus laying open all the older settlements below to their ravages.

When later in May, John Smead, Thomas Knowlton, and Benjamin Simonds from Fort Massachusetts stopped over night at the Rices', on their way to Deerfield for supplies and to carry and get the mail, the captain hastened to tell them the direful news that every comer now brought in.

"The war is beginning to come near home," he said. "We have just heard that Falltown was attacked by the Indians on the 9th, and our friend, Capt. John Burk, wounded in repulsing them, which he did bravely, with a small force. And the very next day, over west in Colerain, Matthew Clarke with his wife and daughter were going to the fort, when a party of Indians fell upon them. The women were on horseback. Though wounded, the daughter carrying a bullet in her thigh, they managed to reach the fort. But Clarke, in trying to cover their retreat, was killed, and scalped of course. You may expect the enemy any day now at Fort Massachusetts."

"They've come already," said Smead.

"What do you mean?" asked Rice.

"On the 9th, the same day on which you say Falltown was attacked, Sergeant Hawks had a skirmish with two Indians just outside the fort."

The captain listened eagerly.

"Not a trace of Indians had we seen, though we kept up constant scouting. Sergeant Hawks went out with John Mighills, one of our men. As Mighills was on horseback, when they reached the ford in the Hoosac, Hawks got up behind Mighills to ride across the river. When they

were well over, he placed his hand on Mighill's shoulder to dismount, and in so doing happened to swing Mighills a little to the left and himself to the right. At that instant two Indians, who were posted in ambush behind trees on the river bank, fired. This movement of Hawks just saved the two men's lives, as the bullets passed between them. But one bullet hit Hawks's elbow, causing him to turn faint and fall from the horse. Mighills ran his horse back to the fort, reporting that Hawks was slain. We were in a commotion then, you may believe, for Hawks is not only a brave man and our commander, but kind and pleasant, and we all like him."

"You don't tell me that Sergeant Hawks was killed or captured?" asked the captain in dismay.

"Sergeant Hawks is not killed so easily as that," spoke up Thomas Knowlton.

"No, indeed," said Smead. "The Indians thought he was dead or disabled, and one of them rushed up to take his scalp. But Hawks had use for that article himself."

The captain could but smile at this, in spite of his anxiety.

"Luckily he revived, and seeing the Indian coming with uplifted tomahawk, managed to

rest his gun on his wounded arm and keep both Indians at bay. You know how determined he can look. I guess the Indians saw that he meant business. One dodged behind a tree, the other down the river bank to hide. He kept them there three-quarters of an hour. Finally he thought he would shoot one Indian, first putting a ball in his mouth so he could quickly drop it into his gun barrel after pouring in the powder, then turn instantly and shoot the other Indian. He changed his position to get a good aim, when he saw both Indians running away through the woods like hunted deer, in different directions."

"Good! Good!" exclaimed the captain, rubbing his hands. "That was truly a providential deliverance."

"A party of us men in the fort rode sadly out to get Hawks's body to bury it," said Simonds. "Imagine our joy when we met Hawks himself coming feebly along, leaning on his gun, but looking undaunted nevertheless."

As these rumors of Indian hostilities all around them thickened, Captain Rice and his family began to feel some uneasiness in their exposed situation. But they were reassured when they learned that Governor Shirley had ordered over two hundred more soldiers to the

northwestern border; that many of these were to be posted at or near Northfield, one company, with fifty large dogs, to be kept out constantly ranging the woods.

At about the same time Governor Shirley had issued a call for troops to invade Canada. A big fleet was expected from England, and the Colonial troops were to co-operate with this fleet in a determined effort to take Quebec and Montreal, and finally conquer Canada.

Capt. Ephraim Williams had joined this army about to invade Canada, leaving Sergt. John Hawks in full command at Fort Massachusetts. This news was brought to the Rices by Salah Barnard and James Rider of Deerfield, who had been out to the fort on business, and stopped on their return.

"Sergeant Hawks is exactly the man for the place," said the captain. "His very name will help keep the Indians away from this section."

"I doubt that," said Barnard, "for they had a little affair with the Indians just before we reached the fort."

"What, are Indians about again?" asked the captain, while his wife and daughters drew near to listen with painful interest.

"It seems that Gershom Hawks and Elisha Nims, two of our Deerfield boys you know,"

—the captain nodded his head, while the women listened more eagerly, knowing these two young men so well, — “went out,” continued Barnard, “about sixty rods from the fort, on the meadow to the south, to hoe some corn, which the soldiers had planted among the tree stumps. Benjamin Taintor took his gun and went with them as guard, though no Indians had been seen near the fort since Hawks’s adventure with them. The boys, in hoeing, had gradually worked away from the fort down towards the river bank. All at once a band of Indians rose out of the bushes, wounded Gershom and killed Elisha Nims.”

“Poor fellow!” exclaimed Mrs. Rice, while the girls turned pale.

“The Indians had laid an ambush between the men and the fort, to cut off all possible retreat, and now these Indians in ambush rose to surround and capture Hawks and Taintor, when a rattling fire from the mount at the fort, where our sentry saw the fight, drove them off. But they succeeded in capturing Taintor and dragging him away. Elisha Nims had a bullet embedded in the back of his neck. He was buried there in the meadow, outside the fort.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The rude stone, erected by the soldiers to Elisha Nims, is now in Clark Hall Museum at Williams College.

Sad news we have to carry home to Deerfield, to his father, Ebenezer Nims."

"Ebenezer and his wife, too, have had such terrible suffering at the hands of the Indians, it is hard they must bear this added blow," said the captain.

"Is Gershom likely to recover?" asked Dinah.

"'T is hoped so, though he is badly wounded. Luckily there are women at the fort, and they are nursing him carefully, doing everything possible for him. Sergeant Hawks has asked us to send up a horse from Deerfield for him, with some one to take him home for treatment."

"The fire from the fort killed one Indian," said Rider. "His body was found buried in the bank of the river, and some long, strong cords were also found, left behind by the Indians. 'T is thought at the fort that they brought these from Canada ready to bind captives to take back with them."

"It is a mercy their plans were defeated," said Captain Rice.

A few days later Joseph Barnard of Deerfield went out to Fort Massachusetts, leading an extra horse for Gershom, who the next day came riding back, hardly able to sit up, pale and feeble, so sad a contrast to the vigorous

young man they had known in the past as to bring vividly home to the Rices a sense of the horrors of war. Mrs. Rice cared for Gershom as if he had been her own son, her mother's heart full of pity for the sufferer.

Many things now combined to give the Rices a lively sense of the possible dangers of their situation. As June passed and July wore on, the air was full of alarming rumors of Indian attacks which reached them from every quarter. There were alarms and more or less fighting at No. 4, at Northfield, at Fort Bridgman, and around Fort Dummer and the Ashuelots, men slain and others captured. An event that especially came home to the Rices was one Aaron related on his return from a trip to Deerfield the last of July.

"David Morrison has been captured. That's the latest news," said Aaron.

"What, you don't mean Hugh Morrison's son, over in Colerain?" asked Mrs. Rice.

"Yes, the same who went out scouting with me last winter. They were all talking about it down in Deerfield. It seems he went out only a few rods from his father's fort, a little over a gunshot length, to shoot a hawk that was hovering around. Out leaped some Indians from the woods, seized him, and vanished.

Pursuit was made at once, but it was impossible to overtake the Indians, and so poor David has gone!"<sup>1</sup>

"It is terrible!" exclaimed Mrs. Rice. "I cannot bear to have you, Moses, and the boys go out to work even in the meadow, though you do always take your guns. We never know what day or hour the Indians may be upon you. To-day I can put my hand upon you," — and Mrs. Rice laid her hand tenderly on the captain's arm, — "to-morrow you may have vanished, perhaps never to be seen by me again, and I may never even know your fate. I wish we could leave this exposed place. I doubt if it is safe for us to stay here longer, with this war raging."

"You must not take these sad happenings too much to heart, Sarah," said the captain soothingly. "With Fort Massachusetts and Fort Pelham at our backs, manned by so many brave soldiers, we are perfectly safe, I think."

"I can't help it. I don't feel safe here," said Mrs. Rice; while Tamar, upon whose naturally delicate frame and nervous temperament the war excitement had sadly worn, burst into tears and hurriedly left the room.

"You see, wife, it would be a terrible loss for

<sup>1</sup> David Morrison was never heard from; his fate unknown.

me to desert this place now," said the captain earnestly. "I have put in larger crops this year than ever before, and the season has been unusually favorable. Everything is thriving, giving promise of an abundant harvest. Here we are, well started and established, all the hardships of beginning a settlement past, everything comfortable. I would n't change places with any of the Deerfield men, if only this war were well over."

"I can't help it, Moses; I still think we ought to leave," persisted Mrs. Rice.

The captain shook his head, sighing heavily. He was indeed placed in a difficult situation. It was hard for him to decide on the wisest course. But the loss would be so great should he abandon his home that he was disposed to remain as long as possible, with a native optimism hoping for the best.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### THE DEPARTURE.

THE men on duty in the various garrisons were often changed from one fort to another as needed. Early in August the commander at Fort Shirley resolved to despatch some of his men to Fort Massachusetts, having heard that sickness had disabled some of the soldiers there. No Indians had appeared as yet around Forts Shirley and Pelham, while Fort Massachusetts was known to be peculiarly exposed to attack.

The morning of Thursday, Aug. 14, 1746, all was bustle and excitement in lonely Fort Shirley, afar on its western hills; for fourteen of the men, with the chaplain, Rev. John Norton, and Dr. Thomas Williams, were to leave that morning for Fort Massachusetts.

The sun was just rising above the eastern hills, but within Fort Shirley all had been stirring in the gray light of the early dawn. Horses were being saddled and laden with blankets and other necessities for such a trip,

men were hurrying across the parade ground from one house to the other, some were watering their horses at the fort well, others hunting to find some needed article that had mysteriously hidden itself at the last moment.

Poor Mrs. Norton, her face pale and set with the effort to repress her tears, her heart heavy within her, kept herself busy, doing last things for her husband's comfort, while the children followed her and their father about, pleased with the unusual excitement, yet vaguely conscious that mother felt badly, that something was wrong.

At last all was ready. The men were mostly mounted, and some were already riding out the gate. Mr. Norton braced himself to say that hard word, "good-bye," to his little family clustered about him. His wife held pretty baby Anna up in her arms for the father to kiss. The baby, dimpled and rosy, clutched her father's cap with a crow of delight and pulled it off, whereat the other children laughed.

"Is n't baby cunning?" said Asenath.

"I want to go too. I want to ride on your big horse, father," said little John, who was a great pet among the soldiers, and often allowed to ride their horses.

"No, Johnnie, father cannot take you up

to-day," said Mr. Norton. "Eunice," he said, turning to his wife and tenderly kissing her, "try to keep up heart. Well do I know how hard this is for you. But I shall be at Fort Massachusetts only a month, and then, after a short tarry at Fort Pelham, I shall be back again. Five or six weeks will pass before we know it."

"But, John," said his wife with a sob she could not repress, "in these dangerous times who knows what is coming? You may be killed. I may never see you again. Our poor little ones —" And here she stopped, unable to speak.

"Eunice," said her husband, trying to be brave for her sake, stoutly holding back the tears filling his own eyes, "we are in God's hands. I go on the work to which God, in his good providence, has called me. I go with humble dependence upon Him for assistance in any dangers or hardships that may await me. And I leave you and my dear children in his care. Trust in Him. He cares for us wherever we are. Remember that always, Eunice, whatever happens. And now good-bye."

He leaped upon his horse and hurried on to join the others, already far in advance. Mrs. Norton stood with her children at the fort gate,

watching him through a blur of tears, until his form was lost to sight in the western woods; then turned back into the fort, which seemed empty and desolate now he had gone, to take up her life with a heavy heart, but trying, with a brave effort for trust and patience, to do her duty without repining.

The riders threaded the woods, seeming but pygmies as they rode along under the dense shade of the huge trees towering far above their heads. The shade was welcome this sultry August day, and all were glad when, riding down a high hill, they caught a glimpse of Fort Pelham's stockade rising on another hillside farther west.

"Yonder is Fort Pelham at last," said Mr. Norton.

"A welcome sight," said Dr. Williams. "We shall none of us be sorry to halt there for an hour's rest through the worst heat of the day."

As they crossed Pelham Brook the men allowed their hot and tired horses to stop and drink its cool, clear water, the very dew of the mountains.

"It does me good to see how old Bess enjoys it," said one of the men, patting his horse's neck as he delayed a bit to allow her to play in the water, plunging her nose in and around

nearly to her eyes, blowing the water playfully about.

"I've no time to waste on such foolishness," said the comrade to whom he spoke, twitching his horse's head sharply up before the horse had half drunk its fill. His horse looked lank and rough, and had an uneasy expression of expecting whip or spur at any moment, forming a marked contrast to shining and contented Bess. She, with flashing eyes and head up, looking about as she journeyed with intelligent interest on everything along the way, was ready to strain every muscle and do her best at merely one word from her loved master.

The men from Fort Shirley soon rode in at the gate of Fort Pelham, where their arrival was a delightful event. They tarried over an hour, to rest their horses, eat their luncheons, and avoid the heat of midday. Comrades visited with old friends and comrades. Dr. Williams inspected the garrison, and prescribed for some men who were not well; and Chaplain Norton, ere he departed, held a short religious service with these men, so isolated here on their hillside in the woods, far from home or church or any civilizing influences.

As the company left Fort Pelham, Mr. Norton said:

“We have some steep climbing before us soon. Our path runs directly over yonder high mountain. But once over that, it is not far to Captain Rice’s.”

“There we shall doubtless get the latest tidings about the war,” said Dr. Williams, “for Rice’s is in the direct line of travel between Deerfield and Fort Massachusetts, and a stopping place for all travellers. I am most anxious to know if the French fleet has appeared off Boston yet.”

“Whatever we hear, I pray there be no bad news from that quarter,” said Mr. Norton.

The colonies, in response to orders from the British ministry, had, at vast trouble and expense, raised a large body of troops for a projected invasion of Canada, Massachusetts alone raising thirty-five hundred soldiers, expecting to be joined by a fleet from England to make a combined attack by sea and land, with Louisburg as a base of supplies. But the feeble British ministers changed their minds, and no British fleet was sent, after all the preparations of the colonies.

On the contrary, a French fleet of forty war ships, with D’Anville in command, was known to have sailed for the New England coast, with the object, it was understood, of taking Boston.

Great alarm and anxiety were felt throughout New England. Many of the Massachusetts troops had been withdrawn from Louisburg, some sent to Boston, some to the western border of Hampshire County. The one great anxiety overhanging Massachusetts now was this coming of the French fleet.

The long file of sixteen men rode down along Pelham Brook, and turning to their left began slowly to ascend the steep, narrow path to the summit of South Mountain.

"Stop a minute and let your horses breathe," said Dr. Williams, when at last they reached the summit.<sup>1</sup>

Below them and far beyond to the west stretched a vast expanse of forest-clad hills.

"There, Doctor," said Mr. Norton, pointing off to the distant western horizon towards a peak rising grandly above the top of the nearer mountains, "yonder is the mountain called Greylock, and Fort Massachusetts, whither we are bound, stands at its foot."

"It looks a goodly distance to ride through the woods," said the doctor, and so thought all as they began the steep descent of South Moun-

<sup>1</sup> The old road from Rowe to Charlemont over South Mountain is still easily traced, and its summit is still called "Norton's Pass," after Chaplain Norton.

tain's southern slope into the valley of the Deerfield.

All were thankful to reach the comfortable stopping place at Captain Rice's ere nightfall. Their horses were allowed to graze awhile on the hillside, under guard, and then driven into the stockade for greater safety. The men visited and exchanged news before camping down for the night, which must be done early, as it was necessary to be up with the first dawn next day for the long, hard trip over Hoosac Mountain.

The Rices were much pleased to have a doctor and minister under their roof. Mrs. Rice made haste to confide to Dr. Williams some symptoms of her own, and to consult him about Tamar's nervousness, though she said:

"I don't think the child will sleep much better so long as we stay in this exposed place, with fresh news of Indian attacks around us coming in almost daily. And I think that accounts for my heart trouble too. I am worried to death. Every morning I get up I wonder if we shall all live to see the sun set."

"I am not surprised, Mrs. Rice, at your anxiety," said Dr. Williams. "These are troubled times, and your situation here is indeed hazardous and the strain hard to bear."

"Is there any recent news of Indian depredations?" asked Mr. Norton.

"Why, yes, there is," admitted Captain Rice. "Early this month the French and Indians besieged Fort No. 4 for two days. They did not succeed in taking the fort, but they killed sixteen horses and all the cattle, burned every house but one outside the fort, and the settlers' mill which they had rebuilt, and killed one man. I understand Governor Shirley has sent extra troops up there to remain until early fall, with orders to bring off all the women and children when they leave."

"Terrible scenes those for women and children to undergo," said Dr. Williams.

"We may have the same doings here any day, and your wife and children may be in like scenes or worse at Fort Shirley, Mr. Norton," said Mrs. Rice.

Mr. Norton looked grave, but said nothing.

"A little later this month the Indians were around Winchester," continued the captain. "They are getting bolder. Only last week, we hear, they appeared near Northfield, in spite of the large number of soldiers stationed there, and waylaid and killed young Benjamin Wright. He was riding out to pasture, armed with his gun, to drive in the cows belonging to people

at the south end, when Indians in ambush fired on him, wounding him sorely. He placed his gun across his saddle pommel and, leaning on that, managed to ride back into the street, where he fell from his horse, dying that night. Indians were seen around Shattuck's Fort the same day."

"Do you wonder, Doctor, that I am begging the captain to leave this place while we can?" asked Mrs. Rice, tears in her eyes.

"It is a hard matter to know what is best," said the captain. "If we should hear that the French fleet had captured Boston, I do not know what would become of this province."

The earnest, devout religious service held that evening by Chaplain Norton was a real comfort to all. The next morning, Friday, the party for Fort Massachusetts were off early, riding up Cold River trail while one side the deep gorge was still in cool shadow. A dewy coolness and sweetness breathed from the still woods, and the world seemed so beautiful and peaceful it was hard to realize that death and danger might lurk in every step.

They reached Fort Massachusetts safely late that afternoon. Sergeant Hawks was greatly relieved by the arrival of reinforcements, and especially to see Dr. Williams. He took the doctor apart, saying:

"The truth is, Doctor, not only are my men nearly all sick, but I am short of ammunition. Then we have lately discovered signs that the enemy are hanging about in this vicinity. We have seen none, yet our dogs and horses act strangely, as they do when Indians are around. And yesterday, when Daniel Smead went down through the cornfield, he saw a fresh moccasin track that he thinks unlike any worn by our men."

"It is a dangerous situation," said Dr. Williams. "What are you going to do, Sergeant?"

"There's no time to be lost. I suppose your brother, Captain Ephraim, may be back in Deerfield by this time. I want you to go down to Deerfield immediately and take him a letter, asking him to send up supplies forthwith for the fort, saying we are very short on it for ammunition, and have discovered signs of the enemy about. I will send men to escort you. You can explain the whole situation to him. Will you go?"

"I will," said the doctor.

After his hard ride from Fort Shirley, perhaps Dr. Williams hardly craved another long, hazardous trip so soon over Hoosac Mountain, the thirty-six miles to Deerfield. But, like other New England men of his time, duty

came first with the doctor; ease and inclination were put second.

Dr. Williams spent the evening prescribing for the sick. Fort Massachusetts stood on low ground, surrounded by undrained swamps, shut in on all sides by high mountains. It was not strange if, combined with unwholesome diet, the August sun beating down upon the surrounding swamps had caused a serious dysentery to break out in the fort, disabling many of the men. The doctor's advice and the remedies he left were timely indeed, not a little cheering and encouraging the sick ones.

When Dr. Williams departed the next morning, escorted by fourteen soldiers, he left but twenty-two men in the fort, — Sergeant Hawks, Chaplain Norton, and twenty soldiers, half of whom were ill. Besides these were the three women and the five children.

It was a bright summer's morning, and all seemed quiet and peaceful. But as the party rode on through the woods their horses acted strangely, sniffing the air, starting and shying at slight provocation.

"I don't like the way our horses act, Doctor," said one of the men.

"Nor do I," said Dr. Williams. "But nothing is to be seen. All seems quiet enough.

Perhaps the horses feel a little gay at first starting. Hoosac Mountain will soon take it out of them."

Little did Dr. Williams and his companions dream, as they rode on through the peaceful woods with the birds singing over their heads, that concealed in the bushes beside their way, so near that (as the Indians afterwards said) they could easily have touched them as they passed, lay an army of eight or nine hundred French and Indians. The enemy were glad to see the force at the garrison depleted by the departure of so many men, and therefore suffered them to ride by unmolested.

When, only the day after he had departed thence, Dr. Williams appeared again at the Rices', Saturday night, and they learned that he had been despatched to Deerfield for ammunition, that so many of the men at Fort Massachusetts were ill, above all that signs of Indians had but lately been discovered around the fort, all were dismayed. Even the captain began to waver under the frantic entreaties of his wife and daughters.

"My advice is, Captain," said Dr. Williams the next morning, as he was about setting forth, "that you yield to the women. You cannot blame them. These are perilous times, and, as

your wife says, you never know in the morning what may happen before night."

"It means a terrible loss for me to give up this place," said the captain, whose face was haggard after an almost sleepless night. He had turned and tossed all night, praying for guidance to do what was best.

"I advise you to take your family right down to Deerfield," said the doctor. "You can easily return a little later and see to things here. No harm may happen. This alarm may soon blow over without any damage done, and probably within a few weeks you can all come back and settle down. I strongly advise you to leave now, for a time anyway. The nervous strain on your women is too great, and there may be real danger besides."

"I am afraid you are right, Doctor," said the captain reluctantly.

When Dr. Williams reached Deerfield that Sunday night, he found that Capt. Ephraim Williams had not yet returned there, and therefore the important letter was not delivered.

The Rices spent that Sunday in toil and confusion. With sad hearts they were packing up the best of their clothing and the few valuables possible for the horses to carry, and stowing away and hiding the rest as best they could.

When Tamar milked her pet cow that night she patted the creature's soft nose thrust lovingly out for her caress, and, after making sure that no one saw her, kissed the white spot on the cow's forehead, saying sadly:

"Good-bye, old Mooley. Perhaps I shall never see you again."

In the early dawn Monday morning the horses were saddled and tied out under the buttonball tree, ready for a start. There was a hurried eating of breakfast, a hasty packing of luncheon and last things for the horse loads, a running about to shut and lock all doors and windows. Captain Rice turned his hogs as well as cows and cattle loose in the pasture, to shift for themselves as best they might.

At last came the time for departure. With sad hearts all mounted and rode down the hill to the east, heavy with sorrow at thus being obliged to abandon their home. Looking back at the turn in the road before the house was lost to view, they saw the morning sunlight shining cheerfully down on the pleasant house under the buttonball tree, the house that had sheltered so many travellers under its hospitable roof, on barns and corn-house full of hay and grain, on their creatures peacefully grazing on the hillside, on the corn and grain waving on

the meadows in the summer breeze, ripe and ready for harvest, the whole a picture of rural, homelike comfort and well-being.

"It looks pleasant there, does n't it, Sarah?" asked the captain, his voice breaking as he looked back on the place that represented so many months of hard toil, so many hopes, so much thought and care and prudent management.

"Oh, Moses," said his wife, wiping away her tears, "it seems more than I can bear! But let us hurry on. I shall not breathe easily until we are safely in Deerfield street."

The captain and the young men rode with their guns ready for instant use, eye and ear alert for the least unusual sight or sound. Bose trotted soberly behind the horses, head and tail down, seeming sensible of the depression overhanging his friends, who rode on in silence, starting if a deer splashed into the river or a partridge, frightened at the noise of their horses' feet, fluttered among last year's dead leaves.

Happily towards night they reached Deerfield safely, where they were kindly received and asked to various homes whose sons had been hospitably entertained at Captain Rice's in days gone by.

They found a general feeling of alarm and uneasiness prevailing at Deerfield. In 1745

the town had voted to help Samuel Allen and the Amsdens at the Bars "build mounts and fortify themselves." For some reason, perhaps because the settlers there felt themselves safe so far to the south, no mounts had been built at the Bars. But now, the Rices were told, the Allens and Amsdens, alarmed at the constant reports of Indian hostilities, had abandoned their homes and all come up into the village to live.

"The Allens are mostly at the houses of the two Hawks families," said Mrs. Hoyt, with whom Captain and Mrs. Rice were stopping. "Mrs. Allen is sister both to Sergt. John Hawks and Eleazer. Mrs. John Hawks feels so worried and anxious about her husband in these dangerous times, that I guess she is thankful to have the Allens with her, to help distract her mind."

"If it is considered unsafe for the Allens and Amsdens to live down at the Bars, I am more than ever thankful that we of Charlemont came in," said Mrs. Rice, whose worn and haggard face showed the strain of anxiety and fear she had suffered.

"Often and often we have spoken of you here in Deerfield," said Mrs. Hoyt, "wondering how you dared remain out there in such perilous times as these."

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### FORT MASSACHUSETTS ATTACKED.

ON Saturday two of the men in Fort Massachusetts, going out several miles, discovered some tracks of Indians. This increased the feeling of apprehension among the little band within the fort, but when Sunday and Monday passed quietly away, their alarm began to be somewhat relieved.

August had so far been a sultry, trying month. But Tuesday morning, Aug. 19, 1746, dawned cloudy, with a change of temperature and a hint of coming autumn in the air.

John Smead was just without the fort gate doing some necessary work, and his wife had come out to watch him and get a little glimpse of the world outside the fort. The close confinement within the fort walls was hard to bear.

“Only see, John, those maple bushes starting up over in the swamp,” said Mrs. Smead, looking rather wistfully out the gate at woods and fields. “They are as bright a red already as if it were

fall. We shall have cool, clear weather soon, and our sick will mend."

"We shall soon be all right again, if only no Indians appear here," said Smead.

"Don't speak of Indians. It makes my heart sink," said Mrs. Smead.

Here Reuben, Simon, and Mary Smead and Ebenezer Scott, who were racing around the parade ground, dashed out the gate, with loud whoop and screams, headed for the woods near by.

"Boys, come back! Come back this minute!" shouted Smead in the tone of one not to be trifled with.

The children ran back into the fort, Reuben saying in an injured tone:

"We were only playing Indian, father. I am the Indian chief, and I was just chasing the others, pretending to scalp them. I don't see why we can't run into the woods."

"I wish you children would play something else," said Mrs. Smead.

"No going outside the fort! Against the sergeant's orders!" said Smead as he slammed the gate to, fastening it securely.

There lay the little fort in its hollow, the great mountains towering all around it. On every side unbroken forest swept to the mountain

tops. All nature seemed to breathe peace and beauty.

"I am glad —" began Mrs. Smead.

At that instant a hideous uproar arose outside the fort; blood-curdling war whoops, fierce yells, the rapid firing of many guns!

"The French and Indians! The woods are full of them! They are rushing upon the fort on all sides!" cried the sentry from the mount.

Mrs. Smead and the children fled into the "great house." Smead and all the well men, including Chaplain Norton, seized their guns.

"Don't fire until they are close upon us!" cried Hawks. "We've not a bullet to waste! Let them come near. Then we can make every shot tell."

The enemy swarmed on all sides the fort, some eight or nine hundred French and Indians. Within the fort, to resist this overwhelming assault, were only twelve well men. But surrender was the last thing thought of either by Hawks and Norton or any of the ten men who stood so valiantly by their leader.

The enemy rushed in a body towards the fort, the hideous whoops and yells of the Indians rending the air. Not until they were within twenty rods of it rang out the guns of the sturdy fighters within the walls. The enemy

recoiled at this, many throwing themselves behind the stumps, trees, and logs thickly strewn in the clearing around the fort. Here they crouched, keeping up an incessant firing from these coverts against the little fort.

Hawks, peering out through the smoke, observed that the Indians were dashing from one tree stump to another, thus contriving to draw nearer the fort.

"Shoot them on the run, boys," he cried.

But the crafty Indians now ran crookedly, zigzagging this way and that, thus dodging the shot.

"Bedad, I shoot at 'em, and they're not there at all!" exclaimed Samuel Lovatt.

"They're slippery as eels," said Scott.

"Wait a bit," said Hawks. "Catch them just as they go to drop behind a stump."

This plan of aiming ahead of an Indian, firing, as it were, where he was not but soon would be, proved successful, and several Indians were seen to fall and rise no more.

Gen. Rigaud de Vaudreuil (brother of the French governor), the officer in command, had sent his ensign with the French flag within thirty rods of the fort, where he stood sheltered by a tree, holding aloft his colors. The sight of the hated French flag, almost waving over Fort

Massachusetts, only served to inflame the fury of fighting that now possessed Hawks and his men.

Hawks noticed a tall Indian, the chief of the St. Francis Indians, actively rushing here, there, everywhere, urging his followers on to assault the fort. Hawks was a fine marksman. Though inwardly he was all aflame with excitement, outwardly he was cool and collected. Taking careful aim, he fired, hitting the tall sachem full in the breast. The chief fell, and the beleaguered men inside the fort took fresh courage.

As Hawks dropped another bullet into his gun, he noticed that General de Vaudreuil had stationed himself on the hill about forty rods north of the fort. Shots now flew so near this tempting mark, that De Vaudreuil was obliged to withdraw, but soon went to the spot where his ensign stood with the flag. Now a well-directed shot wounded the general in the arm, and he and his ensign were seen hastily withdrawing to their camp northwest of the fort.

This cheered the men under Hawks.

"Well done," said Hawks. "Keep it up. If we only had plenty of ammunition, we would make it hot for them."

The attacking force continued an incessant firing, and many of them managed to creep

within a dozen rods of the fort's walls. Now some of the new men, who had but just come into Fort Massachusetts from Fort Shirley, little expecting to engage in an immediate battle, found their bullet pouches getting empty.

On learning this, Hawks at once went to examine again his store of ammunition, finding it, to his dismay, even lower than he had estimated. But there was some lead on hand and moulds, and he forthwith set those best able among the sick soldiers to moulding bullets and shot.

"Fire no more, save when absolutely necessary to keep the enemy back, or when a shot is sure to tell," were now his orders. "It is hard, I know, but now every bullet must do execution."

Under these orders the men in the fort fired but seldom. The enemy, meantime, were out in full view, swarming about the fort on every side, within fifty or sixty rods of the fort, sometimes even within forty rods, their officers walking back and forth, swords in hand, coolly giving orders and taking observations of the fort. From the hill north they were able to look directly into the parade ground and watch what was taking place. It was a most exasperating situation to the brave fighters within the fort.

"It is enough to make a preacher swear —" began Hawks hotly.

"Nay, nay, you forget yourself, Sergeant," remonstrated Norton.

"—to see those French cockerels strutting about in their gold-laced uniforms so near, and be unable to bowl them over for lack of a little lead," continued Hawks. "If this fort were only well stocked with ammunition, I'd guarantee to hold it against twice their number."

In the lower story of the "great house" (as the officers' quarters were called), in the fort's southeast corner, crouched the pallid, terror-stricken women, their little children huddled closely around them, listening to the hideous cries, the crashing of shots, and roar of guns, not knowing when, any instant, husband or father might be brought in dead or wounded.

"I cannot bear it any longer to sit still here," finally said Rebecca Perry, as she rose to go out.

"What are you going to do?" asked Mrs. Scott, hushing the two-year-old boy in her lap, who, crying, said he was hungry.

"I'm going out to help the sick men run bullets," said Mrs. Perry. "I know well how to do it, and I am better able than they."

"It must be almost noon, by the sun, as near

as we can see it for the powder smoke," said Mrs. Scott. "It seems more like a week than a half day since we ate our breakfasts so quietly only this morning."

"It seems nearer a year," said Mrs. Smead.

"If you will take care of the children, I will try to cook something hot and pass to our sick ones and to the men fighting. They must be nearly spent," said Mrs. Scott.

So these brave women partly forgot their troubles in trying to help as they could, and the hot food renewed the strength of the men whose every sense and muscle was under such intense strain.

John Aldrich, one of the soldiers, was brought down to the barrack house from the mount shot through the foot, and soon after Jonathan Bridgman was brought in, with a flesh wound in his hip. The women dressed the wounds as best they could and gave the men soothing drinks. After the wounded men had been made as comfortable as possible, as they lay on their beds, Aldrich said feebly to Bridgman:

"It's lucky we have some women here to care for us."

"Poor Richard says," quoth Bridgman, "that a house without woman and firelight is like a body without soul."

"True enough," said Aldrich. "I cannot help thinking what will become of you and me, Jonathan, if the enemy take this fort. We are in bad shape to start for Canada, that's certain."

"We must trust that things will be ordered mercifully for us," said Bridgman.

The whole fighting force in the fort was now reduced to ten men, including Hawks and Norton.

The long, long dreadful day wore on, and at last the sun began to sink behind the Taconic range.

"What are the enemy planning now?" asked Forbush. "They are out with axes cutting wood."

"Perhaps they are making ladders to storm our fort in the night," suggested Mr. Norton.

"I see now," cried Forbush. "They are tying the wood up in fagots. They mean to burn us out to-night!"

"Not if I can help it," said Sergeant Hawks, hastening down from the mount.

He at once set every able-bodied person in the fort to filling all pails and tubs with water from the fort well in the northeast corner of the parade ground, superintending himself the placing them in the best spots for instant use. Every outer door was examined and doubly

fastened. He also had a passageway cut through between the various rooms built against the fort wall, distributing the handful of men through the rooms, but keeping two all the time in the mount, and some also in the upper story of the "great house," all sharply looking out for possible assault.

The evening came on cloudy and dark. The flash of the enemy's guns illuminated the darkness, as a constant firing was still kept up.

Mr. Norton was in the mount all the evening with Sergeant Hawks.

"It seems as if they were drawing nearer and in greater force than in the daytime," said Norton anxiously, straining his eyes to see through the dark. "It is poor encouragement to shoot at them, for we have nothing to guide us but their fire."

"Yet we must fire now and then, for, if we wholly stop, they will be emboldened to storm the fort," said Hawks. "Let them have a little buckshot."

After keeping up a steady firing all the evening, about nine o'clock the whole army surrounded the fort, shouting and yelling with a hideous outcry. Four times rang out the Indian war whoop, most terrible of sounds.

The beleaguered handful of people inside the

fort waited in anxious suspense for the expected assault, but none followed. Soon the sentries reported that the enemy had set a watch all around the fort, some of the Indians creeping up near the walls, as if to make sure that none escaped during the night. The rest of the enemy retired to their camps. They had two camps: one southeast of the fort, on the bank of the Hoosac; the other on the northwest.

Sergeant Hawks now conferred with Mr. Norton and the eight well men as to what had best be done.

"If I could only manage to send to Deerfield for ammunition and reinforcements!" exclaimed the sergeant. "Cannot one of you slip out the gate and through the enemy's guard?" asked he, anxiously scanning his men.

But no one volunteered for this dangerous and hopeless service. Still the idea of surrender was unendurable to Hawks. Any desperate expedient rather than that. Without giving express commands, he sounded several of the men separately, hoping to persuade some one to venture on this desperate mission.

Finding this hopeless, at last he gave orders for the sick and feeble to get what rest they could, not minding the enemy's noise and outcries.

"You are to lie still all night, unless I call for you," he said.

The ten well men, including himself and Mr. Norton, were divided into relief watches. Some lay down in their clothes, guns beside them, trying in vain to rest or snatch a little sleep, while the others stood on guard, each set relieving the other by turns. Often during the night the Indian war whoop rent the air, when of course the besieged expected instant assault. Sleep was impossible under such a dread strain.

About two o'clock it was Mr. Norton's turn to go on guard. He took his gun and ascended up into the mount. After his eyes had become accustomed to the darkness, he could dimly discern the great bulk of Greylock, the Hoosacs, and the other mountains rising grandly up against the sky all around the fort, seeming in this dim light even more mysterious and powerful than by day. Solemn thoughts filled the chaplain's mind as he gazed on them, — thoughts of the wife and children far away, unconscious of his danger, of the issues of life or death the morrow might bring, of the all-seeing God in whom was his only hope.

As he paced up and down, looking at the mountains whose might hinted of the Power who created them, he murmured:

“I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth. He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber nor sleep. The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, even for evermore.”

Comforted by these thoughts, he breathed a prayer, even amid the din of Indian yells, for his loved ones, and for strength to bear whatever might await him and to help the others, his companions in trouble.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### THE SURRENDER.

THE gray dawn at last slowly dispelled the blackness of night, and all felt relieved to see daylight. The enemy at once renewed their activities, and Sergeant Hawks ordered all his men to their posts, stationing two in the mount. By going into the cornfield on the meadow south of the fort, the enemy were enabled to approach much nearer the fort on that side.

"You and I little thought, when we worked hard to plant and hoe yonder corn hoping for some roasting ears to vary our rations, whom we were planting it to shelter," said Thomas Knowlton, one of the two men on guard in the mount, to Forbush his comrade.

"Misery makes strange bedfellows, and so does war," said Forbush. "None of us knows where he will be sleeping to-night."

"Not in this fort I fear, as things look," said Knowlton.

The enemy now found a new means of distressing those in the fort. Going up on the

hill north of the fort, they were able to fire directly into the parade ground, so that no one could stir from the houses. Many of the Indians were still busy making fagots, evidently preparing to burn the fort. Their firing was kept up briskly and continuously, and the people within the fort, who had not slept, had now nearly reached the limit of their strength under this terrible strain.

About eleven o'clock Thomas Knowlton was shot through the head, as he stood in the mount. It was impossible to reach him, owing to the incessant firing into the parade from the hill, and his body lay where it fell, his gun beside him, as it dropped from his hand.

At noon the firing ceased. Then a French soldier bearing a white flag was seen approaching the fort's gate on the north. He brought a message from General de Vaudreuil desiring a parley. Sergeant Hawks and Mr. Norton, escorted by the bearer of the flag of truce, went out to the point on the hillside where the general awaited their coming, his wounded arm in a sling.

General de Vaudreuil could but look with respect upon his valiant foes. Their faces were blackened with powder smoke and haggard from the strain they had undergone, but their

eyes looked resolutely into the general's, unconquered. The general as yet, though knowing the garrison to be small, had no idea of the few men actually holding the fort against his army.

He offered good terms if the fort were surrendered; otherwise he should proceed to take it by force. He reminded Hawks that, if he were obliged to storm the fort, it would be impossible for him to prevent his Indian allies from wholesale slaughter. His interpreter, Monsieur Doty, made this offer known to Sergeant Hawks.

The sergeant and Mr. Norton looked at each other, thinking of the helpless women, children, and the sick, but Hawks replied:

"I will consider your proposal, and give you an answer in two hours."

He and Mr. Norton then returned to the fort. Calling the other men around them, they considered this momentous question. It was a hard struggle to think of surrendering the fort which they had so valiantly defended, yet the thought of the certain slaughter of the innocent and helpless if the fort were taken by storm made them hesitate.

"Let us ask the Divine guidance in this strait," said Sergeant Hawks at last. "Chaplain, will you lead us in prayer?"

A touching picture is that of this handful of brave men, afar in the wilderness in their smoke-begrimed, battered fort, surrounded on every side by wild, wooded mountains and a foe of overwhelming numbers, standing with reverently bared heads in undoubting faith around Chaplain Norton, while he earnestly besought the God in whom they trusted, the God of their fathers, to guide them aright in their momentous decision.

After the prayer, Sergeant Hawks said:

"I will examine our stock of ammunition once more, and see how long we can possibly withstand the enemy, if he assault us."

Only three or four pounds of powder and as many of lead were found to be left in the fort.

"If they attack us our ammunition will be spent in a few minutes," said Sergeant Hawks. "If we were all well, or if we had no women and children here, in spite of that I would willingly stand it out to the last."

"So would I," said the valiant chaplain, and all agreed in this feeling.

After further deliberation, Hawks at last said:

"As matters stand with us, I fear it is best to surrender, getting the best terms we can. It is hard, terribly hard, but I can see no other way for us."

He therefore offered to surrender the fort on these terms:

First, that all should be prisoners of the French, the general promising that none should be given into the hands of the savages.

Second, that all the children should live with their parents during the time of their captivity.

Third, that the prisoners should all be exchanged at the first opportunity.

General de Vaudreuil accepted these terms, and also promised that the prisoners should have "all Christian care and charity exercised towards them"; that those who were weak and unable to travel should be carried; that all should keep their clothing, and that they might leave a few lines behind to inform their friends of their fate.

About three o'clock on Wednesday, Aug. 20, 1746, the fort gate was opened, and General de Vaudreuil and his officers, Demuy, St. Luc, La Corne, and the rest, were admitted, the gate then being closed, shutting out the rank and file of the French and the wildly excited Indians. The handful of men within the fort had resisted an army of eight or nine hundred for thirty-six hours, and would not have surrendered then but for absolute lack of ammunition.

General de Vaudreuil at once ordered the

French standard set up, and from the top of the "great house" floated proudly the lilies of France over brave little Fort Massachusetts, a sight hard indeed for Sergeant Hawks and its other defenders to witness calmly.

The French officers were moved by both pity and admiration when they learned the exact condition of affairs within the fort, and hastened to "speak comfortably" to their prisoners, assuring them they should be kindly treated. Monsieur Doty interpreted the speeches on either side.

"The dead body of one of our young men lies up in the mount where he fell," said Sergeant Hawks. "We crave for it a decent burial."

"It shall not be abused, but given decent burial," replied the general.

Alas, he had promised more than he could fulfil, for even while this conference was going on, his Indian allies, excited to the last degree, furious at being excluded from the fort which they had helped to take, began pulling out the underpinning on one side the fort walls, until two or three of them were able to squeeze through the hole thus made. These ran to the gates, throwing them wide open, and the other Indians rushed in, until the parade ground was

crowded full. The frightened women and children shut themselves into one of the houses, where they listened in terror to the turmoil without.

A fiendish whoop soon went up from the Indians. They spied the blood of poor Knowlton, which had trickled down from the mount, and the sight at once infuriated them. They were determined to go up in the mount. The French held them back for some time, but were at last unable longer to control the savages. They rushed up into the mount, seized Knowlton's corpse with fierce whoops of triumph, dragged it down and outside the fort, where they scalped it, and cut off the head and arms.

A young Frenchman, probably a habitant who had grown up amongst the Indians, and was more savage than they, deliberately flayed one of the arms, roasted it, and offered some of the flesh to young Daniel Smead as the boy stood, helpless, surrounded by his foes.

"No, I will die first," said Daniel, recoiling with disgust and horror.

The Frenchman laughed, and proceeded to take a mouthful himself in bravado, an act much admired by the Indians.

The English captives, clustered in one corner

of the fort, were forced to look on and see their most cherished possessions and private belongings overhauled and destroyed by the Indians, who were in full tide of triumph, swarming into every nook and corner, greedy for plunder.

General de Vaudreuil now ordered that the prisoners be taken to his camp, and that the rifled fort be burned. The fort's walls, made of pine logs that had dried all summer in the hot sun, kindled readily.

As the little band of exhausted, heavy-hearted captives toiled off to the northwest under a strong guard of French soldiers, looking back they saw flames and smoke rising high from the fort, while the Indians, flourishing their tomahawks and guns, danced the war dance in its blaze with loud shouts and songs of triumph.

Hardly had they reached the camp when Monsieur Doty, the interpreter, sought Chaplain Norton on a delicate errand.

"The general desires that you, Chaplain, persuade some of the captives to go with the Indians," he said. "The Indians are set upon having some of the prisoners for their own, to present to the governor as theirs, when we reach Canada. Sergeant Hawks, yourself, and the families shall all remain with the French officers."

"But this is exactly contrary to our agree-

ment," exclaimed the thunderstruck Mr. Norton, "and to the general's solemn promise. It will be deliberately throwing away the lives of our sick and wounded."

"No, no, not so," said Monsieur Doty in bland tones. "The Indians will treat them kindly. Of course all are prisoners of the French. Yet the general hopes some will be willing to go with the Indians."

"You should speak to Sergeant Hawks. He is our commander," said Mr. Norton coldly, disgusted with this perfidy.

Monsieur Doty now sought Sergeant Hawks, where, heart-sick and exhausted, he had sunk upon a log for rest, and made the same proposal to him.

"I took the general to be a man of honor and hoped to find him so," said Hawks.

A long and heated debate followed, between Hawks and Norton on one side and Monsieur Doty on the other, ending with a flat refusal on the Englishmen's part to waive this vital part of their treaty of surrender.

"I hope the general will not insist upon this thing, but will keep his promise to the prisoners," were Mr. Norton's concluding words, as Monsieur Doty departed in ill humor at his failure.

In spite of the refusal of the English to break

the terms of the treaty, shortly after Monsieur Doty had departed some French officers came to the little group of prisoners, and took John Perry and wife and all the prisoners except Sergeant Hawks, Mr. Norton, John Smead and Moses Scott and their wives and young children, and distributed them among the Indians. This gave eleven prisoners to the French and nineteen to the Indians.

It is impossible to describe the dismay among the prisoners at this violation of his promise by the French general. All their lives they had heard stories of the horrors of Indian captivity from friends and relatives who had experienced them. Now they too were captives to Indians, being borne to Canada. They lay down that night on the banks of the Hoosac, a strong guard set over them, a few to sleep from utter exhaustion, but many to pass a night of distress and painful foreboding.

Mr. Norton, weak and exhausted as he was, had yet, amid the surrounding confusion, managed to write a short letter. The next morning he obtained the general's permission to return to the fort, that he might post it in some conspicuous place, where it might perhaps be found by the English and reveal the fate of the fort's garrison.

The letter read as follows:

"These are to inform you that yesterday, about nine of the clock, we were besieged by, as they say, seven hundred French and Indians. They have wounded two men and killed one Knowlton. The General de Vaudreuil desired capitulations, and we were so distressed that we complied with his terms. We are the French's prisoners, and have it under the general's hand that every man, woman, and child shall be exchanged for French prisoners."

Under guard of a French officer and several Indians, Mr. Norton returned to the fort. The August sun this Thursday morning shone brightly down on the blackened and trampled spot where only a few charred, smoking ends of logs and the scorched well-sweep, still standing above the well choked with rubbish, revealed where Fort Massachusetts had stood.

The French officer, well pleased with the victory won, happy in the thought that soon he should be at home, hummed lightly a gay love song as he paced up and down; the Indians prowled about the rubbish for some bits of metal or other scraps of plunder that might have been overlooked; while Mr. Norton sadly fastened his letter to the well post, praying silently:

“O God, our strength and refuge in this hour of our calamity, so order, I beseech thee, that our friends may find this letter, that they may use every effort to redeem us.”

This done, Mr. Norton and his guard returned to camp. The prisoners stowed away their few belongings in packs to be carried on their shoulders, and the long, dreary march was begun, up the old Mohawk trail along the Hosaac's shore, then northward for Crown Point and Canada.

## CHAPTER XX.

### AT THE BARS.

THE inhabitants of Deerfield had no means of knowing the disaster at Fort Massachusetts, and therefore life went on with them evenly and quietly as usual.

Friday morning, the day after the Fort Massachusetts prisoners started for Canada, ten men were sent from Deerfield to the Colerain forts. When well up among the Shelburne hills, riding cheerfully along with no thought of danger, suddenly they were fired upon by a party of Indians lying in ambush. One Bliss, a Connecticut soldier, was killed and scalped. The other soldiers managed to escape to the nearest Colerain fort. There was no way to send word of this affair back to Deerfield, so people there continued wholly unconscious of danger.

On Sunday every one in Deerfield able to be about attended meeting as usual. The Rices appreciated the privilege of going to meeting and worshipping once more with their fellow

believers, but Mrs. Rice said to her husband after their return home:

“Perhaps it is wrong in me to criticise Parson Ashley. But my heart was sore and heavy within me, and I longed unspeakably for some words of gospel comfort, and Parson Ashley discoursed entirely on our sins and those of the nation, saying, ‘God speaks in anger by the judgments he executes; He is speaking to his people this day with the terrible wrath of an angry God,’ and so on. As I listened there seemed no hope or comfort anywhere.”

“Parson Ashley does his duty as he sees it,” said Captain Rice. “It was no doubt a powerful discourse, calculated to make sinners tremble. But I myself, like you, yearned for something more comforting.”

Little did Parson Ashley and his flock dream, as his majestic periods rolled out from under the sounding board over the heads of his peaceful hearers (some of whom would never sit again in the home church), that in the woods on Shelburne Mountain prowled a band of sixty Indians, their faces smeared with war paint, peering down from behind the trees on the green meadows north and south of the village, seeking a chance to slay or take captive. These Indians were a part of De Vaudreuil’s forces who, dissatisfied

with the number of scalps and captives taken at Fort Massachusetts, had come down to Deerfield hoping to increase their spoils. It was this band which had attacked the men going to Colerain.

Monday morning was bright and sunny.

"A capital day this to gather in our hay from the south meadow," said Samuel Allen. "Could not be better."

He and the Amsdens, though living in Deerfield village at present, still went down to cultivate their fields at the Bars. Saturday they had been obliged to stack a quantity of well-seasoned hay and leave it over Sunday.

"I feared rain yesterday," continued Mr. Allen, "but none has fallen, and our hay will be in prime condition to come in to-day. Caleb, run over to Oliver Amsden and tell him we will set out for the Bars as soon as I have secured two soldiers from the garrison to go with us as guard."

"May I go down with you, father?" asked Caleb.

"Yes, yes, run along. I'm in a hurry to get off," said his father.

A number of soldiers from Connecticut were stationed at Deerfield, and some of them always went out to guard the inhabitants when at work on the meadows.

The Allens were staying with their relatives, the Hawkses. Young Eleazer Hawks, nephew of Mrs. Allen and of Sergeant John, had been ill, but was now recovering.

"It is such a pleasant morning, Uncle Samuel, that I am tempted to take my gun and go out with you," said Eleazer. "Perhaps I can shoot a few partridges. It really seems as if a roasted partridge would relish."

"I am glad if you are beginning to have an appetite again, Eleazer," said Mrs. Allen.

"Oh, mother," cried Eunice Allen eagerly, "cannot I go to the meadow too with father? I've been shut up here in the village so long I should love to go down to the Bars and gather some wild flowers."

"If Eunice and Caleb are going, I want to go too, mother," said little eight-year-old Samuel.

"As long as your father and Cousin Eleazer are going, with two soldiers for guard, I see no harm in letting you all go, if your father is willing," said Mrs. Allen, smiling at the bright faces of her children, and anxious to indulge them in this rare chance for a little outing.

"You can go, children," said Mr. Allen, looking indulgently at the eager young faces. "But I shall expect you all to help me some by raking after the cart."

"We will. We would love to," cried the children, dancing about from joy and excitement.

Oliver Amsden, gun, pitchfork, and rake over his shoulder, chanced, as he was going down to the Hawks house, to meet Sylvanus Rice. The Rices were still waiting in Deerfield, hoping soon to return home.

"Come on, Sylvanus," said Oliver. "Go down to the Bars with us. You can help a little, and it will be something to do."

"I'd like nothing better," said Sylvanus. "I'll just run in and tell mother that I am going, and then overtake you."

But Sylvanus met with unexpected opposition.

"I do not want you to go so far out of the village, Sylvanus, unless it is absolutely necessary," said his mother. "Somehow I feel such a sense of foreboding. I cannot shake it off. I suppose it may come from our living so long in Charlemont, expecting an Indian onslaught any day. I should suffer untold anxiety every moment you were gone."

"If your mother feels that way about it, you had better not go, Sylvanus," said his father.

And so Sylvanus was reluctantly obliged to stay at home, secretly feeling that his mother was quite unnecessarily anxious.

The ox carts going down to the Bars that morning bore a happy company: Mr. Allen and his three children; Oliver Amsden and his little brother Simeon, who was going because his cronies, Caleb and Samuel Allen, were; Eleazer Hawks, his pale face brightened at being able to be out once more; and the two Connecticut soldiers, who felt their duties as guard merely nominal, it being long since an Indian had been seen in or about Deerfield.

The sun streamed warmly down, drawing out sweet odors from the tall wild grass covering the meadows. The golden rod was beginning to bloom, and beside the river, as they rode along its bank, was a mass of yellow tansy blossoms, their bright hue intensified against the background of the river's clear water, which reflected the deep blue of the sky above as it rippled by over its pebbles.

"Only see how pretty the tansy looks," said Eunice. "I mean to pick a big bunch of it when we go home."

"Mother will hang it up in the attic to dry for medicine," said Caleb.

"Not all of it," said Eunice. "I shall fill a pitcher full to stand in the living-room fireplace for a bouquet."

All chatted and laughed, feeling the bright

influence of the morning, and glad to be out in the fields. The oxen plodded on the two miles below the village, and through the bars which gave the locality its name, out west to the meadow where the hay stood in stacks ready to be loaded.

The men began to load the carts, while the children ran about helping rake a little but playing more, their good-natured father looking indulgently on their sport.

"If I were only good for anything, Uncle Samuel, I would gladly help you," said Eleazer. "But as I am not, I believe I will step over into yonder woods and see if I can flush a partridge or two."

"Good luck to you," said Mr. Allen.

Eleazer disappeared in the woods which covered the rising ground to the south. Soon the report of his gun rang out.

"I guess Eleazer has shot one partridge already," said little Samuel.

Suddenly from the woods broke a loud, crashing volley of many muskets!

Mr. Allen, Oliver, and the soldiers hastily seized their guns. Out from the covert of the woods rushed sixty Indians with fierce war whoops, surrounding the dismayed little company on all sides.

Astounded as he was, Mr. Allen's first thought was for his children.

"Run, children!" he cried. "Run towards the fort!"

He and the other men began a fighting retreat towards a mill which stood at some distance on the bank of the river. They ran backwards, firing as they ran, hoping thus to divert the Indians' attention from the children.

But the number of the enemy was too great. Reaching the river, under its high bank the men made a last desperate stand. Allen saw the foremost of their pursuers fall under his fire, but in an instant more he and Gillett were overpowered, killed, and scalped. Saddler, in spite of the bullets raining thickly about him, succeeded in dashing through the river to an island covered with bushes, where he hid and so escaped.

Others of the Indians were chasing Oliver Amsden and the flying children. Oliver was the first to fall. Not only was he scalped, but his head was severed from his shoulders. Simeon Amsden, after a stout struggle by the sturdy boy, was killed, his hands and arms being cut in pieces. Caleb Allen ran into a field of corn, and so escaped notice in the Indians' haste.

Little Samuel Allen, after a sharp chase, was caught by a young Scatacook. The boy's desperate resistance, as he fought his captor with teeth, nails, and feet, so won the Indian's admiration, that he felt Samuel to be worth saving, to adopt and bring up as an Indian. Eunice ran with the speed of desperation, but at last was overtaken by an Indian, who drove his hatchet into her skull, leaving the little girl for dead as she fell prostrate, but in his haste not stopping to scalp her.

Well did the Indians realize the need of haste. They knew that their guns, heard in Deerfield village, would bring pursuers straightway on their track. Two of them seized Samuel Allen by the arms and ran with him so fast that his feet did not touch the ground. Away the Indians sped, across the river and up its shores to the west, well satisfied to have added to their spoils one captive and six scalps, including that of Bliss, killed in Shelburne.

Instant alarm was given in Deerfield by the distant sound of the firing. A number of men started to the rescue on horseback, lashing their horses to frantic speed. Othniel Taylor's horse fell dead as he reached the place of the assault. All were horrified at the terrible sight of their friends' bleeding, mangled bodies lying

scattered about on the ground. While some gave care to the bodies of the dead and tenderly raised the unconscious form of Eunice Allen, who was found to be still breathing, others pursued hotly on the track of the savages.

As quickly as possible two parties rode out of Deerfield in pursuit of the Indians. One was led by Lieutenant Hoyt, the other by Lieutenant Joseph Clesson. Hoyt's party followed the river, while Clesson's cut across the hills to Charlemont, hoping possibly to intercept the Indians there.

Much to his wife's dismay, Captain Rice insisted on joining Clesson's party.

"I must, anyway, go out and look after things at home," he said. "I can not rest easy until I know the state of things there. I fear the worst. Still we may have escaped damage by some providential interposition, but I must go and see for myself."

Great was the grief and excitement throughout the village when the bodies of Samuel Allen, Eleazer Hawks, Gillett, and the two Amsden boys were brought back to Deerfield, Caleb Allen riding behind one of the men as pale as his sister Eunice, whose bleeding, unconscious body was carefully borne in the arms of another rider. As little Samuel's body had not been

found, no one knew his fate, whether killed or captured.

Mrs. Allen's sorrow was almost more than a woman's heart could bear. Ministering to poor little Eunice, trying to save the life of this child still left, helped her somewhat. It was a merciful distraction to have something that must be done. Mrs. John Hawks, full of sympathy for her stricken relatives, trying to help them all she could, little dreamed that her own husband was even then a captive, each hour travelling farther and farther away on the road to Canada.

The band of men under Lieutenant Clesson pushed on up and over the Shelburne hills with all possible speed, but did not succeed in overtaking the Indians. As they neared Rice's home, traces of Indians along the trail thickened.

"I greatly fear, Captain Rice, that we shall find the savages have wrought serious harm on you," said Lieutenant Clesson.

"It will be a miracle if they have done me no mischief," said Rice.

He rode eagerly ahead. As he came at last in sight of his home a scene of utter ruin and devastation burst upon him, worse even than he had imagined possible. The buttonball tree, its overhanging boughs scorched and shrivelled,

stood extending its arms into vacancy over a heap of blackened ruins where the house had been. House, barn, all the outbuildings were burned to the ground. With them had been consumed the captain's summer crop of hay, three hundred bushels of grain already harvested, a large quantity of clothing, provisions, furniture, and every tool, vehicle, or implement on the place. All fences were torn up and burned. All but the land was gone.

As the men rode nearer, several wolves were seen running away towards the woods, and a flock of buzzards flew up. There lay the mangled carcasses of the captain's seven cows and cattle and of his seven hogs strewn about on the bloody, trampled ground where the Indians had left them, after hastily slashing off some of the flesh. Tamar's flower beds were trampled and ash-strewn. It was a scene of absolute devastation and ruin, of utter loss such as few indeed are called to bear.

The captain stood looking at the blackened ruins in silence.

"Captain, I'm sorry for you," said Clesson. "It's a terrible blow to you. What ruin and desolation have not these savages brought on our province, first and last, set on and abetted as they are by the French!"

"The work of a lifetime — gone," said the captain in broken tones. But a moment later he added: "I ought not to complain when others have lost their dearest ones by the same bloody hands. Thank God that we were moved to leave when we did! Even a day's delay might have cost the lives of my whole family and my own."

"It was truly a providential deliverance, a most narrow escape for you all," said Clesson.

The thoughts of all the party now turned towards Fort Massachusetts. What was the condition of affairs there? Was the fort even now beleaguered?

Resolved to learn immediately the actual state of affairs at the fort, Clesson with a few of his men rode off at once up the Cold River trail to go over Hoosac Mountain, while the rest, with whom went Captain Rice, returned to Deerfield, where the captain had the hard task of telling his wife and family of the ruin which had befallen them. Stunned by the blow, they hardly knew at first which way to turn.

"What can we do, Moses? What will become of us?" asked his wife.

"We can only wait and see. The way will open," said the captain. "Let us at least thank God that our lives are spared. Had we re-

mained longer at Charlemont it would have meant certain death or captivity for us all."

"I shudder to think of it," said Mrs. Rice. "God forgive me for murmuring at any hardships when we all still live."

Captain Rice found that Lieutenant Hoyt and party had returned from an unsuccessful pursuit of the Indian marauders, whose swiftness had enabled them to make their retreat in safety.

Saturday afternoon, August 30, Clesson and his men returned from Fort Massachusetts, riding directly to Lieutenant Hoyt's to report.

"What news from the fort?" asked Lieutenant Hoyt eagerly, while, seeing the riders, people came running from every direction, gathering around the jaded looking men who had just ridden in.

"Fort Massachusetts is destroyed, gone, burned to the last log," said Clesson.

"And the garrison? Sergeant Hawks and Mr. Norton and the others; what of them?"

"We know naught of them. They are all either slain or captured. There were no signs of life about the ruins. We rode on as swiftly as our horses could travel on that difficult path over the mountain. At last we reached a spot where we had a distant view of the fort. At the first glance we noticed that the cleared

ground around the fort was all white. We at once mistrusted that something was wrong."

"White?" queried Hoyt. "What could cause that?"

"The Indians had ripped up the feather beds, strewing the feathers all over the ground. We rode nearer until we saw plainly that the fort was burned to the ground. There was no sign of life stirring anywhere about it, save buzzards and wild beasts feeding on the bodies of slaughtered cattle or men, we know not which. We were so few we thought it not prudent to go any farther, a useless exposure; so turned and rode home."

"A dire calamity this," said Hoyt. "I must despatch postriders forthwith to Colonel Stoddard at Northampton and to Governor Shirley to inform them of it."

Friends went to Mrs. Hawks to break to her the news of her husband's disappearance. Whether he were killed or captured no one knew. It was more than doubtful that she would ever see him again.

"If I could only hear from him, only *know* something about his fate or where he is," said the grief-stricken Mrs. Hawks to the kind friends who tried to comfort her, though there was little for the most sympathetic to say. "But this

awful silence, these doubts, this dreadful uncertainty seem more than I can bear."

A post also carried the sad news to Fort Shirley, where Mrs. Norton and her children were awaiting the return of the husband and father.

Luce 'Bijah, moved by the distress and sympathy filling all hearts in Deerfield at this time, composed a poem which attracted much attention as the work of a wholly uneducated negro slave.<sup>1</sup>

On hearing of the destruction of Fort Massachusetts, Colonel Stoddard despatched a body of men under Captain Partridge of Hatfield to the fort, to learn the exact conditions there, and bury the dead. Captain Partridge buried the remains of Knowlton, and found Mr. Norton's letter, still legible, clinging to the well post. But about the time of his return, on September 11, all uncertainty as to the fate of the garrison at Fort Massachusetts was removed by a letter which Colonel Stoddard received and sent post-haste up to Deerfield. It had been written to him by Mr. Norton at Crown Point on September 1, which place the captives had then reached. It was sent down by the French scouts to the frontiers, and finally reached Colonel Stoddard by way of Albany.

<sup>1</sup> Appendix D.

Mr. Norton's letter gave a detailed account of the fight, the surrender of the fort, the terms of capitulation, reported the death of Knowlton and the wounding of Aldrich and Bridgman, and said that the rest of the garrison were alive, and that all were kindly treated by their captors and had promise of exchange.

This letter was the greatest relief to the friends of the captives. Mrs. Hawks and Mrs. Norton, in the reaction from their despair, felt something akin to joy. Now they might hope again. Their husbands were alive, and well, and kindly treated. Patience, and yet more patience, and then, by and by, in God's good time, they should welcome them home again.

In September great relief was given all New England by learning that the dreaded French fleet, which had been hovering all summer off the coast, owing to sickness and various disasters, had been obliged to sail back to France without striking a blow. The English regarded the French disasters as a wonderful display of providential power in their own behalf.

The fall of Fort Massachusetts filled with consternation the people in all the little settlements along the Connecticut. Winchester, Keene, and Fort Hinsdale in New Hampshire were all abandoned. The settlers at the outlying

post at No. 4 were almost panic-stricken. The women and children, as well as most of the men, left in the early autumn, but six men remaining in the fort. In January these six men, perhaps frightened by some signs of Indians in the vicinity, decided to depart. In the haste of their leaving they took no thought of the dog and cat, and the two little creatures were left alone in the abandoned fort.

The Rices decided to return for the present to their former home at Rutland. Here the captain's oldest son, Samuel, and his family were still residing. Samuel had expected to join his father at Charlemont, but the war had broken up all such plans.

"There is no possibility of our returning to Charlemont until the war is ended," said the captain to Lieutenant Hoyt in discussing his plans for the future. "My land is left. The savages could n't destroy that, thank the Lord, though they would if they could. Some time, God willing, when the war is ended, I may pluck up heart to return and start all over again."

"I do not wonder that you feel disheartened, Captain," said Lieutenant Hoyt. "But we shall all hope to see you back again as soon as it is safe for you to venture. You are always sure of a warm welcome in Deerfield."

And so the Rices, who had ridden hopefully up the Bay path to found their new home but three short years ago, now rode sorrowfully back again to Rutland, where they were received in the home of their son.

Aaron, however, remained behind. In December he rode out again over the familiar road to Charlemont, stopping at the old homestead. He looked at the blackened cellar hole, at the charred logs strewing the pleasant hillside under the buttonball tree, which seemed consciously lonely and deserted, stretching out its branches above the ruins as if it yearned for the friendly human companionship it had so long shared.

So at least it seemed to Aaron as he sat sadly on his horse, contemplating the ruin before him, the pitiful end of so many toils and hopes, while the bleak December wind whistled around him, wailing through the tall pines on the hill, and wildly lashing and creaking the buttonball's bare, scorched limbs.

Then he turned his horse and rode along the path beside Mill Brook, up the steep ascent of South Mountain, and on to Fort Pelham; for Aaron had enlisted as one of the garrison there.

## CHAPTER XXI.

### CLOSING EVENTS OF THE WAR.

ALTHOUGH the year 1747 opened so gloomily, Massachusetts was still resolved to maintain the border forts. In February, Capt. Phineas Stevens wrote Governor Shirley, urging that Forts Massachusetts and No. 4 be maintained, their existence being vital to the safety of the settlements below, saying:

“If anything be done it should be done early in the spring, as it is evident from past experience that the enemy will be down by the first of April.”

Accordingly Captain Stevens, with a company of thirty soldiers, was sent north to Fort No. 4 as soon as the snow disappeared, the last week in March.

As they drew near the site of the abandoned fort, Captain Stevens said:

“I wonder much if we shall find the fort still standing.”

“It will be a miracle if the savages have not destroyed it,” said his lieutenant.

Coming out of the woods, eagerly straining their eyes for some sign of the fort, lo, there it was seen still standing unharmed!

"This is good fortune beyond my fondest hopes," said Captain Stevens. "Providence has certainly smiled upon us."

In good spirits the men pushed open the gates to enter the fort. What was their amazement when out came running joyfully to welcome them Towser and Tommy, the deserted dog and cat! Thin, rough, and ragged in coat, but still alive, the little creatures capered for joy at seeing once more their friends.

How they had managed to exist no one could imagine. But somehow, probably by hunting, they had contrived to keep life in their little bodies here alone during two months of winter in this northern wilderness. The soldiers hastened to feed with their best the brave little animals who had held the deserted fort when every one else had abandoned it, and Towser and Tommy were petted and pampered enough to atone, partly at least, for all their hardships, and their fame has gone into history.

In April, Capt. William Williams of Deerfield was sent to rebuild Fort Massachusetts, taking with him two companies of soldiers, and aided also by some of the men from Fort Shirley,

where Capt. Ephraim Williams was still posted, in command of the line of forts. The work was finished by the last of May. Even while the work was going on a party of one hundred men, who had been to Albany for supplies, on their return were attacked by a large body of French and Indians lying in ambush near the fort. The workers at the fort rushed out to the aid of their friends, and the enemy, being between two fires, were repulsed after a sharp skirmish.

Captain Stevens's prediction, that the enemy would be around soon after April 1, was soon verified. The morning of April 3 it was noticed that Towser and the other dogs brought by the soldiers to Fort No. 4 were much excited, barking and running to and fro.

"Those dogs scent Indians or I'm badly mistaken," said one of the soldiers.

"I'm going out to reconnoitre, with Captain Stevens's good leave," said another.

Captain Stevens and the garrison were at once on the alert. Cautiously opening the gate, this man was suffered to go out with the dogs. He went about twenty rods. All seemed quiet. He discharged his musket, at the same time sending forward the dogs. The enemy, thinking themselves discovered, sprang up from be-

hind logs, firing at the venturesome man, who, though wounded, managed to beat a swift retreat to the fort.

On all sides the fort now swarmed the enemy, with the usual whoops and yells pouring in their fire. The struggle lasted three days. The enemy set fire to a hut and fence to the windward of the fort. The brisk spring wind bore the smoke and flames directly down upon it. Built of dry pine logs, it would soon have gone but for the quick wit of Captain Stevens. He set his men to digging eleven ditches under the walls, so deep that, standing in them without, the men were yet protected from the enemy's fire. The soldiers in the fort kept up a brisk firing, while men inside handed out buckets of water to those without, who thus managed to keep the fort walls saturated. Several hundred barrels of water from the fort well were thus used.

On the third day, unable either to force or induce Stevens and his men to surrender, M. Debeline abandoned the siege and withdrew his forces.

When news of this gallant defence reached Boston, Sir Charles Knowles, in command of the British ships there, sent Captain Stevens a fine sword. When the town was incorporated,



“ On all sides the fort now swarmed the enemy.” *Page 328.*



in 1753, the compliment was returned by naming it "Charlestown" after the commodore.

Debeline's forces, after leaving No. 4, burned the deserted settlements at the Ashuelots and Winchester, and lying in ambush north of Northfield killed two men.

The captives taken at Fort Massachusetts, hard though their lot at best, yet met with unexpected kindness from their captors. The women and children and the wounded were carried much of the way. On the second day of the march, Mrs. Smead gave birth to a daughter, whom Mr. Norton baptized as "Captivity." On a carrying frame of poles, covered with deer and bear skins, Mrs. Smead and baby Captivity were borne on the shoulders of two men. Wednesday, a week after their capture, the captives reached the French Fort St. Frederic at Crown Point.

On the following Sunday the band of sixty Indians who had made the onslaught at the Bars came into the fort in triumph, bringing their six scalps and the captive boy, little Samuel Allen.

Mr. Norton and his uncle, Sergeant Hawks, were allowed to talk with the boy, who looked forlorn and pitiful, and seemed bewildered by his strange experiences.

"What was said in Deerfield about the capture of Fort Massachusetts? What was being done about it?" asked Mr. Norton.

"None in Deerfield had heard of the fort's capture that morning when I was taken," said Samuel.

"Is it possible?" exclaimed Mr. Norton.

"How was my wife?" eagerly asked Sergeant Hawks.

"I saw Aunt Elizabeth that morning as I was starting for the Bars," said Samuel. "She was standing in the doorway laughing and talking with my mother as we rode off."

"Poor woman!" said Hawks.

The interview was soon interrupted, for Samuel's Scatacook master, jealous at this conference with the boy's uncle, hurried him away. He was taken to St. Francis, the same Indian village where that other boy captive from Deerfield, Stephen Williams, had gone forty years previous. The other captives were taken by the usual route, up Lake Champlain and the Richelieu, reaching Quebec September 15, where they were placed in the "prisoners' house," a large building in which were then confined one hundred and five English prisoners.

"Here," says Mr. Norton in his journal, "we had the free liberty of the exercise of our reli-

gion together, which was matter of comfort to us in our affliction. Sergeant Hawks and myself were put in the captain's room."

The prisoners were well treated, and might perhaps have been fairly comfortable but for a terrible fever which broke out, a ship fever brought into the prison by some English who had been prisoners on two French men-of-war. The fever spread rapidly. Now began a sad series of deaths, recorded as the days went on in Chaplain Norton's diary. Of the thirty captives taken at Fort Massachusetts, fifteen died in the Quebec prison, — nine of the soldiers, the three women, Mrs. Scott, Perry, and Smead, John Smead's two sons, Daniel and John, Jr., and his baby Captivity.<sup>1</sup>

On July 25, 1747, Sergeant Hawks, Mr. Norton, and most of the captives from Fort Massachusetts still living boarded the ship *Vierge de Grace* for Boston, where they arrived on August 16, almost a year to a day since their capture. The sick and feeble were taken to a hospital, while the others received from the people of Boston every kindness. But the returned captives were not disposed to tarry. Hawks has-

<sup>1</sup> John Smead, the faithful soldier, who had borne so many hard trials, was killed by Indians, seven weeks after his return from Canada, near the mouth of Miller's River.

tened home to Deerfield, and Mr. Norton to the hills of Heath to rejoin his family in Fort Shirley.

The joy of reunion was saddened by the death of baby Anna Norton, which had occurred in August, shortly before the father's return. On the bleak hillside outside the fort was a little grave, marked by a rough stone, on which some one, perhaps one of the soldiers, had rudely cut an inscription.

Rev. John Norton was afterwards settled in East Hampton, Conn., and long after Fort Shirley had ceased to be, tradition says that a solitary woman from Connecticut, probably Eunice Norton, was wont to come up to visit the grave of the baby sister on the lonely hillside, shut in by all-surrounding woods. After standing there one hundred and forty years the rude gravestone was taken to Clark Hall Museum at Williams College. Recently a small marble stone, bearing the old inscription, has been sent over from Williamstown and set up to mark that baby's grave of long ago.

Sergeant Hawks was not long suffered to remain at home. Soon after his return he was put in command of the Northfield forts. But events ere long took him again to Canada. On the 16th of October, Capt. Ebenezer Alex-

ander and two others, returning from the Ashuelots to Northfield, in Winchester met some cattle running as if frightened. Presently they saw a man in French uniform coming in the path. On seeing the Englishmen he jumped behind a tree, but not before Captain Alexander had fired, wounding the Frenchman in the breast. He advanced towards them to surrender, but they, misinterpreting his action, and expecting that their shot would bring a party of French and Indians immediately upon them, hastened away, leaving the Frenchman where he fell, fainting, on the ground.

The band of Indians who were near came at once on hearing the gun, but, thinking their leader dead or dying and fearing pursuit, departed for Canada, where they reported him dead. The young Frenchman belonged to a prominent family in Canada, being Pierre Raimbault St. Blein, a grandson of the governor-general of Montreal.

After his double desertion, by friends and foe, St. Blein revived and wandered feebly about the woods, living on nuts and cranberries for four days, when he struck the Northfield path and came into the settlement, making sign of surrender to the first man he met, who, oddly enough, proved to be the very Captain Alex-

ander who had shot him. Rev. Benjamin Doolittle, the Northfield minister, was a skilled surgeon and doctor as well as preacher, and under his care young St. Blein so far recovered as to be able to go to Boston in a month. Here his charms of person and manner made him a great favorite with the Boston ladies.

In November, forty Indians under De Longueuil surprised some men near No. 4, killing several and taking one captive. From this prisoner De Longueuil learned that St. Blein was still alive and in Boston, and he bore the news to the French governor at Quebec.

St. Blein meantime was working hard to effect his own release. He proposed to Governor Shirley that he should be exchanged for Samuel Allen and Nathan Blake of Ashuelot. Governor Shirley appointed Sergeant Hawks to take St. Blein back to Canada and secure the exchange of prisoners. With Hawks went Matthew Clesson and John Taylor of Deerfield.

The four men were fitted out with provisions for the trip at Deerfield by the commissary, Col. William Williams. Each man had sixty pounds of provisions, chiefly stewed peas thickened with flour and dried. Carrying this burden, in addition to blankets, etc., they set forth on snowshoes February 8 for the difficult

winter journey of three hundred miles to Canada, mostly through unbroken forests. Governor Shirley had wished them to go by way of Albany, but, as St. Blein had not yet recovered full strength, Hawks chose a shorter route.

After two days they reached No. 4, and thence went up the Black River, over the Green Mountains and down Otter Creek to Lake Champlain, then up the lake and the Richelieu on the ice to Montreal. There they arrived Feb. 27, 1747. The first day out from No. 4 they were escorted by a party from the fort, among whom was a spirited Scotch-Irish youth of eighteen named John Stark, destined to become famous in later history. They camped that first night in the present town of Cavendish, Vt., on a height since called for this reason "Hawks Mountain."

On this route they had no road but the Indian trails, no guide but the rivers and their compass. At night they camped on beds of spruce boughs on the snow, eating their meagre food, which barely sustained life.

Near Quebec, Hawks and his party stopped at the home of St. Blein on the banks of the St. Lawrence, where St. Blein was received by his rejoicing family as one literally restored from the dead. His father was anxious to lavish

attentions on Hawks and the others, but their business was too pressing to admit of unnecessary delay. On their return to Montreal, however, they stopped at the St. Bleins'. A great entertainment was given by the grateful family, where wine flowed freely, and feasting and dancing were kept up all night, a novel and exciting scene to the staid Englishmen. St. Blein is said to have presented Hawks with a choicely ornamented pipe and tobacco pouch in token of his gratitude.

Of course Sergeant Hawks was most anxious to secure the release of his little nephew, Samuel Allen. It was for this he had chiefly undertaken this hard trip to Canada. But for a long time he was unable to get any trace of the boy. The Indian who had captured and adopted Samuel loved him as his own child and was determined to retain him. The governor used in vain every means in his power to discover the boy and return him to his uncle.

One day, as Hawks sat in the governor's house, gloomily wondering if he must give up his search and return to Deerfield without the boy, he noticed a squaw's blanketed head thrust within the door, then quickly withdrawn. This was twice repeated. Then it occurred to Hawks that the squaw might have some errand to him.

Her face seemed familiar. Surely he had seen her somewhere before.

When again she thrust her head within the door he motioned her to enter. Now he recognized her as Kichkenechequah, the old squaw whose wigwam had stood near his brother-in-law's house at the Bars.

Looking cautiously around, to be sure none overheard, the squaw whispered:

"You seek Samuel Allen. Indian woman know his father. Indian woman know his mother. Indian woman bring Samuel to his white uncle."

Then, warning him to keep silence, she slipped away, and soon returned dragging the little captive. Kichkenechequah, having thus repaid the kindness shown her and her son long ago by the Allens, silently vanished.

To his uncle's joyous greeting, Samuel made no response. Although he had lived but eighteen months with the Indians, he had already acquired many of their habits and ideas. He pretended not to recognize his uncle and refused to speak English, pretending he had forgotten it. In short, he preferred to remain with his Indian father, and Sergeant Hawks was obliged to drag him away, much against the boy's will.

With great difficulty Hawks secured the release of Nathan Blake. The Indians, admiring Blake for his strength and courage, his skill in running, etc., had adopted him to fill the place of a dead chief. They finally consented to let him go, if he would first build them a house like those of the English. With great labor and inadequate tools, Blake succeeded in splitting boards out of logs and completed his task, being then released.

Fearing that the Indians, so reluctant to part with Samuel and Blake, would pursue them to rescue the ransomed captives, Hawks and his party hastened their departure, securing from the governor the services of young St. Blein as escort to the frontier. They returned by the same route taken in going to Canada, using many precautions to puzzle and throw off their track the Indians who they strongly mistrusted were following them.

At the Great Falls they made a raft, on which they glided down stream in the night, reaching Fort Dummer at nine o'clock the next morning. We can fancy the sullen, half Indian Samuel, gliding along on this raft, eagerly eying thicket and woods for some sign that his Indian friends were coming to his rescue.

From Fort Dummer, Blake set joyfully off

for Upper Ashuelot to join his friends, while Hawks, Clesson, Taylor, and Samuel continued on the raft to Northfield, where they lodged the night of April 29, and where their arrival with the captive boy was an event of intense interest and excitement.

The morning of April 30 they set out on horseback for Deerfield, escorted by many of their Northfield friends. Halfway from Northfield to Deerfield they met Colonel Williams of Deerfield and about twenty others from that town riding up to escort Hawks and his party home.

It was a glad reunion. Great must have been Sergeant Hawks's satisfaction and relief that he had made this difficult journey in safety, had eluded his pursuers and reclaimed his nephew. He recorded in the diary kept by him on this trip:

"We delivered our little traveller to his mother, and had the pleasure of seeing a poor, disconsolate mother made joyful beyond expression by the reception of her son from a miserable captivity."

Samuel Allen lived to a good old age, ninety-five years. It is interesting to know that to his dying day he stoutly maintained that the Indian manner of life was the happiest.

What was the subtle charm of Indian life, overriding all its hardships? Was it that instinctive love of nature, of simplicity, of the wild wood, which lends fascination to modern camp life? Was it the freedom from the stern restraint of the Puritan domestic and religious customs of the time? We cannot tell, but certain it is that other redeemed captives are known to have shared Samuel Allen's preference for the Indian life.

## CHAPTER XXII.

### RETURN OF THE RICES.

THE rest of the year 1748 saw repeated incursions of small bands of the enemy on the settlements of western Massachusetts, in which many were killed, wounded, or captured. Important events were Melvin's Scout, and Hobbs's Fight on the head-waters of the Green River. Oct. 7, 1748, a treaty of peace between France and England was signed at Aix-la-Chapelle, though not proclaimed at Boston until the following May.

The conditions of this treaty were most unsatisfactory. To the intense disgust of the New England people, the fortress of Louisburg, captured chiefly by their prowess, was restored to the French. All felt that this so-called treaty of peace was rather a patched-up truce, and that war would inevitably soon be resumed.

Captain Rice, who had remained in Rutland during the war, returned to Charlemont with some of his sons early in 1749, and rebuilt his home on the site of his former house, under the

buttonball tree. Later in the year his whole family returned there to live.

Their three years of absence had wrought some changes among the Rices. Dinah had married Joseph Stevens of Rutland, but later returned to Charlemont to live; Sylvanus was now twenty; Tamar, a blooming young maiden of seventeen, and Artemas a tall youth of fifteen. In brief, the Rice children had grown up, in a fashion that children have. Bose, a feeble old dog now, but still brave and loyal to his friends and their interests, returned with the family.

All were glad to return to their old home, and rejoiced because Othniel and Jonathan Taylor had moved out to settle on their land, about five miles down the Deerfield from the Rices'.

And the very next year the Hawks brothers, Gershom, Seth, and Joshua, settled upon their land, a mile or so west of the Rices', so that now there were three groups of families living within a range of seven miles along the Deerfield, making the Rices feel much less isolated. As Mrs. Rice often said:

"It does seem so good to have neighbors. And, now our children are grown up, I enjoy seeing Othniel Taylor's youngsters running around when I go down there."

Her heart was soon to be gladdened by the advent of grandchildren of her own, for in 1752 the captain's oldest son, Samuel, moved to Charlemont to live, with his wife and three little boys, Moses, Asa, and Martin. A house was built for him on the meadows below his father's, and the little grandsons were the idols of the captain and his wife, living quite as much at their grandfather's as at home, and keeping the whole house animated.

Other settlers began to come into Charlemont, the Whites and others. In 1752 the restless Green River district of Deerfield was incorporated and set up in life as a town by itself, under the name of "Greenfield." Two Deerfield men, Catlin and Ryder, had settled near the falls in Deerfield Northwest. Everywhere around the settlements were growing. No wonder Captain Rice felt that all his bright hopes and predictions for the future of this new region were beginning to be verified. He often said:

"I told you so. I knew that these fertile unoccupied lands along the Deerfield were sure to be in demand by settlers who had eyes in their heads."

In 1753 Aaron Rice built both a cornmill and a sawmill on Mill Brook, and the settlers took steps towards laying out some highways and

erecting a meeting-house of their own, and a young minister, Rev. Eleazer May from Wethersfield, Connecticut, preached two Sundays in Charlemont as a candidate. The frame for the meeting-house was erected, but the building was never completed, for fears of another war now began to disturb the people.

The French had improved the interval of peace steadily to push their cordon of forts and settlements westward, along the lakes and down the Ohio River, encroaching boldly on land claimed by the English, and threatening, if unmolested, to possess the whole continent west of the Alleghenies.

In 1753 the governor sent a young Virginia surveyor, named George Washington, over the mountains to learn what the French were doing. Washington was told that the territory belonged to France, and would be held by her against all comers.

In 1754 young Washington, now a major, was again sent, with troops, into the disputed territory to drive out the invaders, but was repulsed. The Indians now resumed depredations all along the frontiers, and it was evident that another war with France was inevitable.

The Rices were greatly disturbed when they found themselves on the brink of another war.

"We might as well give up here and go back to Rutland," said Mrs. Rice. "I never can live through such a strain as I endured here in the last war."

"You forget, mother," said the captain, "that the whole situation has changed. We are no longer here alone. We have quite a little settlement here now; neighbors all about us, and the settlements to the north have grown so much we are no longer so exposed."

"Yes, and I'm grown up too now, mother. You have another soldier to fight for you," said Artemas. "I'll help make it lively for any Indians that come around here, I promise you." And Artemas banged an imaginary gun at Tamar, who was just entering the room.

Mrs. Rice laughed. Then the anxious look returned to her face, and she said:

"But you say, Moses, that the government has ordered Fort Pelham and Fort Shirley to be abandoned."

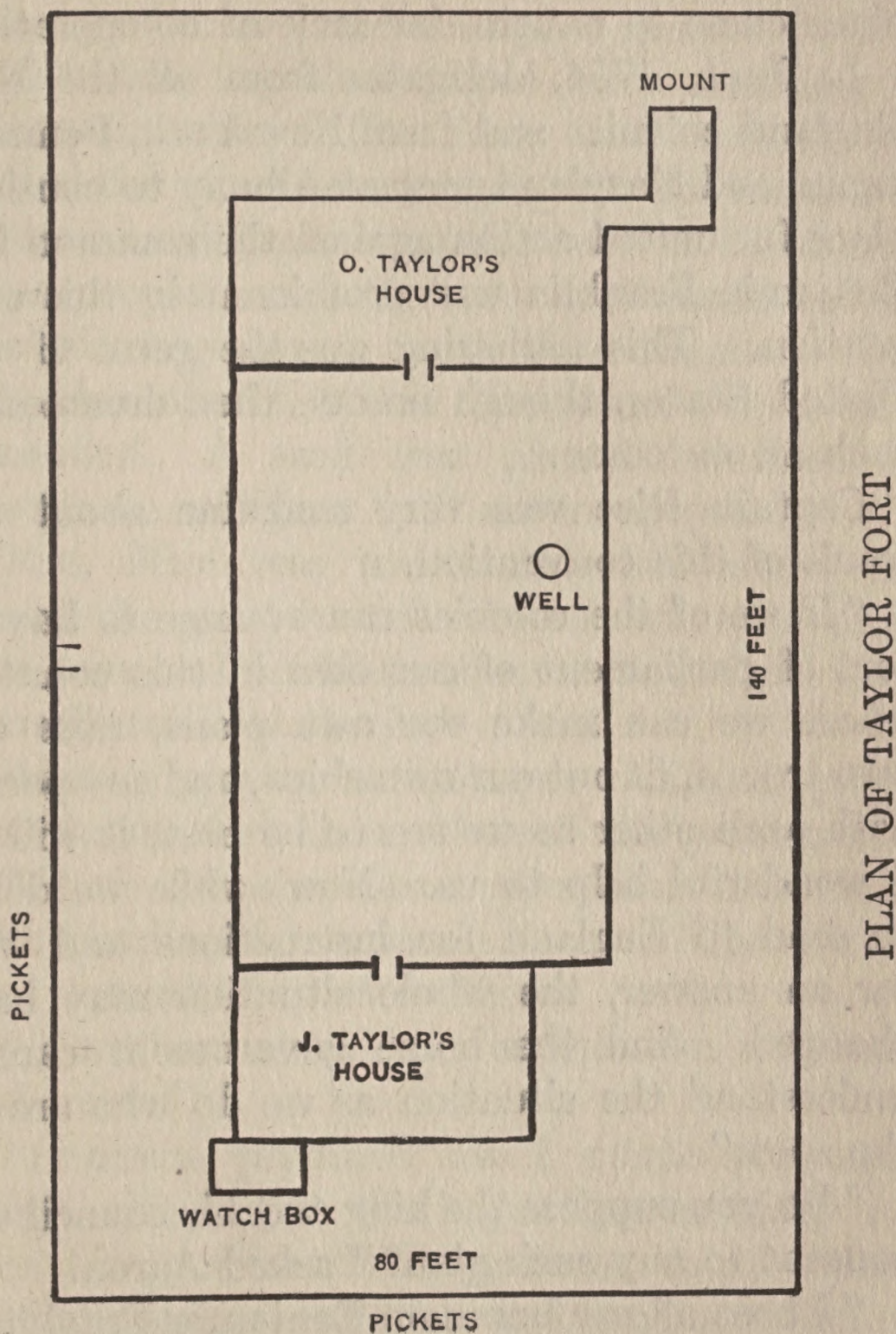
"Yes, because they were felt to be of little use. But Fort Massachusetts is to be strengthened and more soldiers stationed there. The best news is that Capt. Ephraim Williams is to take command there in person. Sergeant Hawks has been put in command of the Colerain forts. And we here at Charlemont are to fortify our

houses, and some soldiers will be stationed here. I shall go at the work immediately. I had hoped to see our meeting-house done, but that will have to wait now until the war is over."

Captain Rice was aided not only by his four stalwart sons, but by Titus King, who had returned with the family, and Phineas Arms of Deerfield. The captain owned so much land and had so many important interests that he needed much help, and Phineas had "gone out West" to seek his fortune, as young men still do, only the western wilderness then lay much nearer eastern homes than now.

The Rice house on the hillside was soon well fortified, intended to be a refuge for Samuel Rice and family and others, in case of attack. The Taylor brothers moved their log houses near together, surrounding and connecting them by a palisade of log pickets, building within the enclosure a watch box and a mount, commanding a wide view of the country up and down the river. The Hawks brothers moved their houses together and fortified them in like fashion.

The captain was also cheered by hearing that an effort was to be made to unite all the colonies in a union for common plans of defence. Hitherto each colony had done the best it could alone,



PLAN OF TAYLOR FORT

and men and material were often wasted and plans came to naught for lack of co-operation.

In June, 1754, delegates from all the New England colonies and from New York, Pennsylvania, and Maryland met at Albany to consider plans for united action against the common foe. Benjamin Franklin was prominent in this convention. This gathering was the germ of the United States, though no one then dreamed of such an outcome.

Captain Rice was very sanguine about the result of this convention.

"If we of the colonies can arrange to have a sort of parliament of our own in this country, where we can make our own plans, raise our own troops, fit out our own ships, and co-operate with each other as we see to be best, it will be a wonderful help to us. Now, while we delay to send to England for instructions and wait for an answer, the whole situation may have changed. And the home government cannot understand the situation as we do who are on the spot."

"Do you suppose the king and his council will consent to any such plan?" asked Aaron.

"I base all my hopes on Benjamin Franklin," said the captain. "Poor Richard knows a thing or two. A man that can tame the light-

ning and bring it down at his beck and call can manage the king and council, I guess."

But the captain's hopes were destined to disappointment. The king and council rejected the plans drawn up by the convention at Albany as giving too much power to the American people; and the war was conducted in the old haphazard, methodless manner. But the idea of a union of the colonies had been broached. A seed was planted destined to germinate and bear fruit ere many years.

Mrs. Rice was much disturbed when she heard the captain tell Artemas that he must ride over to Fort Massachusetts with meal from Aaron's mill for the fort.

"Surely you are not going to let that boy ride over to the fort alone, Moses," she protested.

"He is n't going alone, grandma. I'm going with him," spoke up Moses, Samuel Rice's oldest son, a sturdy boy of twelve.

"You!" exclaimed his grandmother. "Worse and worse!"

"Grandpa promised me I might go," said Moses, clinging to the hope that nothing, not even his grandmother's protests, could induce his indulgent grandfather to disappoint him.

"You must be crazy, Moses, to think of letting those boys take that trip alone."

"Well, Sarah, it is Hobson's choice with me. Captain Williams has ordered the meal of Aaron and needs it, and it must be sent over right away. I'm as busy as I can be; have plenty of work for every man I can lay hands on. I can spare Artemas more easily than any of the others."

"And I want to go awfully, mother," said Artemas. "I want to see the fort."

"Of course," said his mother. "But to take that child Moses along!"

"Moses can ride a steady horse as well as any one," said the captain, "and his going saves sending another man. Moses is a likely boy, if he is my namesake. Give the boy a chance, Sarah, to see and do and be something. Boys can't always be tied to their mother's apron-strings, or their grandmother's either, if they are going to be good for anything. 'The sleeping fox catches no poultry.' Give the boys a chance, Sarah."

When the two boys set off early next morning, their horses laden with meal bags, Asa, Moses's younger brother, stood under the button-ball tree watching them until they disappeared up the path to the west, well worn now by frequent travel to the Hawkses' and Fort Massachusetts.

"I wish I were going with them," said Asa.

"I wonder your grandfather did n't let you, Asa," said Mrs. Rice. "It is hard for him to say 'no' to you children."

"Grandpa says every dog has his day, and my day's coming," said Asa. "I only hope it will come pretty quick. I can ride as well as Moses."

"You're grandma's dear boy," said Mrs. Rice, looking fondly at the little fellow. "I could n't get along without you."

"Give me two pails, grandma, and I'll bring up some water for you from the spring," said Asa.

"One pail will do for a boy of your size," said Mrs. Rice. "Aunt Tamar will take the other."

Tamar and Asa ran a race down to the spring, and Tamar lent a helping hand to the overfull pail that Asa insisted on tugging up the hill.

Artemas and Moses enjoyed their long ride up the Cold River trail, across Hoosac Mountain, and down into the valley where stood Fort Massachusetts. They stayed a day at the fort to rest before returning, and the two wide-awake boys saw and heard much that interested them in and about the new fort.

They especially enjoyed watching the soldiers practise shooting at a mark. They had a hoop

covered with deerskin; a soldier went up the hill north of the fort and sent the hoop rolling down. Bang, bang went the guns as each soldier tried to hit the swiftly rolling hoop before it reached the bottom of the hill.

"Why are you doing that?" asked Artemas.

"To train us to shoot Indians running," was the answer. "They'll have to run mighty fast if they get away from Bass yonder. He's the best marksman among us. He does n't try at the hoop any more. That's mere child's play for him."

Artemas gazed with respect on Bass, standing one side, watching the others, laughing at some of the wide shots of his comrades. He soon had a chance to see what Bass could do with a gun.

Two hawks were seen flying overhead high up in the sky. Bass shot one, then seized a gun from a comrade's hand and shot the other before the first dropped to the ground.

A ringing cheer went up, but Bass picked up his two hawks with the matter-of-course air of one who could do greater things if opportunity offered.

"I shall practise firing at a rolling hoop covered with deerskin when we get home," said Artemas.

"I'll roll it down hill for you, Uncle Artemas," said Moses, "if you'll let me have a try at it too."

"Of course," said Artemas.

In the evening the boys sat around an open fire in one of the barrack rooms and listened to various stories of their experiences told by the soldiers in this remote border fort. One story called out another.

"I saved my bacon once pretty closely by outwitting some Indians," said one of the men.

"I was in garrison then at Fort No. 4, under Captain Stevens. One day he sent four of us out on a scout to the north. As the day went on we all made up our minds we were followed by Indians. We did n't see or hear anything, but somehow we were sure of it."

"Felt it in your bones, I guess," said a comrade.

"Just so. When night came we built our camp-fire as usual, as if we had no suspicions of Indians around. But, instead of lying down by it, we cut logs of wood about our size, wrapped our blankets around them, and laid them around the fire. In the dim light (we were careful not to have too bright a fire) the logs looked like men camped down with their feet to the fire. Then we all hid in the woods and watched.

"It was n't long before there was a flash and whang of muskets through the darkness, and then out of the woods into the circle around the fire sprang a band of Indians with triumphant whoops, thinking they had surprised us asleep."

"Then you had them exactly where you wanted them," said one of the soldiers.

"Yes, they were out in the light, while we were snugly hid behind trees. We peppered them well till those left ran for their lives like hunted deer. We received a fine bounty for the dead Indians, and Captain Stevens was pleased, you may depend."

"Nat Nichols and John Brown of our garrison had a pretty close call when out scouting the other day," said another speaker, turning to Artemas. "They were scouting over towards Pontoosuc when they came on the trail of some Indians. They followed it along cautiously until they came to a high rocky ridge, on which they walked. Presently down below them in the woods they saw an Indian. He was standing bent over with his foot on a log, fixing his moccasins, in the midst of a lot of tall brakes.

"Nat is a young fellow apt to take rash risks. That Indian was too tempting a mark for Nat, and he blazed away at him without taking

much thought of the consequences. The boys saw the Indian leap into the air and fall dead. Instantly up from under those brakes popped a band of fifty or more Indians! John fired off his gun at them, and then he and Nat ran for their lives, the Indians after them, whooping for vengeance.

“When the boys reached the end of the rocky ridge they dropped off into a thicket of low-growing hemlocks below and lay still. The Indians dashed by on a run, whooping fiercely. The boys dared not stir until after dark, when they cautiously worked their way back to the fort. A party that was sent out next day found two dead Indians in the brakes. But the boys ought not to have taken such a risk. They ran more than ten chances to one for their lives.”

It was very entertaining to sit by the fire safe within the fort and hear these stories, but they gave Artemas some uneasiness about his homeward trip over the mountain. The soldiers, however, assured him that they had discovered no traces of Indians in that direction, and Captain Williams considerably sent three men on a scout over the Hoosac, who escorted the boys part way home, where they arrived in safety, full of stories of all they had seen and heard.

## CHAPTER XXIII. .

### THE END.

SOON after Artemas's trip to Fort Massachusetts general alarm was caused throughout the colony by the capture at No. 4 of Ebenezer Farnsworth, the Johnson family, and two others by eleven Indians of the St. Francis tribe. Extra forces were sent to the border forts and "thirty-eight pair of Indian shoes for the scouts at Fort Massachusetts, and a deerskin to mend them with."

"I'm glad enough," said Artemas, "that Moses and I had our trip to the fort before we heard of this Indian raid at No. 4, for we should never have been allowed to go after mother heard of that."

"You would n't have wanted to go, I guess," said Tamar.

"Oh, I don't know," said Artemas. "I don't think I should have minded."

"They that know nothing fear nothing," said his mother. "You were so young at the time of the onslaught at the Bars I suppose it

made little impression on your mind. But those who know the horrors of an Indian attack can never forget the impression."

A happy event in the Rice family that autumn, doing much to divert their minds for the time from the alarms of war, was the marriage of Aaron on November 5 to Freedom French, daughter of Thomas French of Deerfield. The Rices had long known Freedom in their frequent visits to Deerfield, and gladly welcomed her as one of their family.

It was a happy company that rode down the winding path beside the river to attend the wedding at Deerfield, and many were the jokes coming back, Aaron bringing his fair bride on the pillion behind him.

Artemas, whose sharp eyes had observed that during the wedding festivities Sylvanus and pretty Esther Nims were never far apart, made his brother blush furiously by ruthlessly calling out:

"Say, Sylvanus, don't you wish you were bringing Esther Nims up on your horse?"

The year 1755 opened with determined efforts on the part of the colonies against the enemy. Three important military expeditions were planned against the line of French forts confronting the English settlements: one from Vir-

ginia, commanded by General Braddock, with young Major Washington as his aide-de-camp, against Fort Duquesne on the forks of the Ohio; one under Governor Shirley against the forts on the Niagara River; and one led by Sir William Johnson, with its rendezvous at Albany, against Fort St. Frederic at Crown Point.

The New England men enlisted readily for this last expedition, hoping to take the fort and deal the enemy such a crushing blow as to stop the desolating raids into their own territory. Nearly a whole regiment enlisted from Hampshire County, including many men who had served in the border forts. This regiment was commanded by Ephraim Williams from Fort Massachusetts, now promoted to be colonel; Seth Pomeroy of Northampton was lieutenant-colonel; Dr. Thomas Williams, surgeon; and Rev. Stephen Williams of Longmeadow, chaplain. Sergeant Hawks went as a lieutenant in this regiment, and Aaron Rice as corporal in the company of Capt. John Burk of Bernardston, as Falltown was now called.

Deerfield continued to be the centre of supplies for the surrounding forts. Powder and lead were carted to Deerfield in quantities from Boston and distributed thence on horseback

to the different forts, and more soldiers were sent to man these forts.

Twenty-four of these soldiers were sent to Charlemont, but, much to the disturbance of the Rices, twelve each were quartered at the Hawks and Taylor forts, and none at the Rices'.

"This seems a strange way to treat you, Moses, who were the first settler here, and have borne the brunt, trying to found this settlement," said Mrs. Rice. "I cannot understand it."

"Oh, we can get along without them!" said the captain. "We have seven able-bodied men of our own, and plenty of lead and powder. Besides, I don't think there is much danger of our being attacked now. Indians coming over the mountain by the old trail would naturally fall first on Hawks's fort to the west."

He did not choose to tell his anxious wife that the position of the Rice fort on the hill-side, where the enemy could look directly down into it from the hill above, was considered too exposed for defence, and hence no soldiers were stationed there.

On May 31, Colonel Williams and the Hampshire County regiment were ordered to march to Albany. The withdrawal of so many men

from that section left the borders more unprotected, and the Indians were not slow in discovering the fact.

Early in June, Col. Ebenezer Hinsdale was ill at his Deerfield home, while his brave wife had gone out to Fort Hinsdale, "not being easy to stay away these difficult times," as the colonel wrote to Col. Israel Williams. He also wrote that he was "Moved with indignation to think that a few barbarous wretches should make such havoc on our frontier as to kill and captivate our people, kill our cattle, and fire their guns in hearing with great audacity, as we hear they Daily Do at No. 4, and none to Repell or Silence them."

As yet no traces of Indians had been seen in or around Charlemont. But the Rices and other settlers, feeling the need of caution, always went armed to their work in the fields, and the women and children were not allowed to go far outside the forts.

One Wednesday morning in June, Captain Rice went to work in his cornfield in the meadow below his house.

"Phineas," he said to young Arms, "it is your turn to keep guard to-day."

"All right," said Phineas laughing, as he took down his gun. "I'd almost as soon be

pacing up and down this bright morning as to be hoeing corn."

Asa, now nearly nine, was proud and happy because his grandfather had selected him instead of his brother Moses to ride horse for him to harrow. Artemas and Titus King were also to assist the captain. The others were at work on another part of the large farm.

All carried their guns to their work as usual. The captain and his helpers stacked their guns beside a pile of logs near the western brook (called Rice's Brook), which at that time flowed into the Deerfield near the mouth of Mill Brook. The field was bounded by Mill Brook on the east and Rice's Brook on the west.

Phineas paced back and forth, along the edge of the field, near the present road, from brook to brook, the sunlight glinting on the shining gun barrel resting on his shoulder.

The captain guided the harrow, while Asa proudly rode up and down the long rows of corn, and Artemas and Titus hoed.

It was such a tempting morning to be out that Tamar was glad when her mother said:

"Tamar, I wish you would run down to Samuel's and see if Dorothy can let me have some emptins. I must make yeast to-day. We're running short."

"Come down with me, Freedom, it's so pleasant," said Tamar. "We won't be gone long, mother."

The two pretty girls, bareheaded, ran down the hill, chatting and laughing, and across the meadow to Samuel's house, noticing, as they went, the workers in the cornfield near by.

"The men will be hungry enough this noon after working in the cornfield all the morning," said Freedom.

"They are always hungry enough, for that matter, to keep us busy cooking," said Tamar.

Their errand done, the girls did not hurry home. They could not resist stopping to play with little Samuel, nearly two years old, who was trotting about outdoors in the sun, his cunning baby ways and tricks irresistible.

Who could imagine, as the sun shone down so peacefully on the cheerful workers and the happy homes on the bank of the beautiful Deerfield, that in the woods on the hill, just above the Rice house, lurked six of the St. Francis Indians, eager to capture or kill?

Stealthily these Indians crept down Rice's Brook, behind the thicket of bushes along its bank, and lay hid until the workers were at the farthest point from their pile of guns. Then out rushed the Indians, seizing the guns,

firing them, and rushing upon the defenceless men.

Phineas Arms, shot in the head, fell dead in the cornfield. Captain Rice was severely wounded in the thigh, and Titus King was seized and overpowered. The horse, terrified both at the firing and the sight of Indians, ran, throwing Asa off. The boy hid in some bushes, but was found by the Indians and made prisoner.

Artemas managed to elude the Indians. Hotly pursued by some of them, he ran as boy never ran before or since, not even in a race, for life is the great prize, and well did Artemas know that his chance for life hung on his ability to outrun the whooping Indians, close on his heels. He ran the five miles to Taylor's fort, bursting in upon the surprised inmates, dropping, spent and powerless, as he panted out his terrible story.

Upon the ears of the women, chatting happily in the sunshine outside Samuel Rice's door, suddenly burst the roar of guns, the blood-curdling war whoop of Indians. In the meadow they saw the terrible conflict going on. Terror-stricken, seizing the younger children, they fled up the hill to Rice's fort, where Mrs. Rice was frantic with fear for her husband and the others.

They saw the Indians drag away their helpless captives up the hill near Mill Brook. It was all over in a moment, the blow falling like a flash of lightning. Only an instant, and it is past; but the wreck and desolation it may leave behind!

The Indians dragged Captain Rice about half a mile. Though sorely wounded, the captain fought heroically for his life. After a fearful struggle he was left, scalped and bleeding, to die on the hillside. But later in the day he was found by his sons, still living, and taken to Samuel's house, where he died that evening.

All the calamities Mrs. Rice had dreaded seemed now to have fallen upon her with crushing force. The captain lay dead in the midst of his stricken family. Phineas was dead, and Artemas, Asa, and Titus had vanished, whether slain or captured no one knew.

Mr. Taylor, on receiving the alarm from Artemas, bravely set out for Deerfield, travelling the seventeen or more miles with such hot haste that he returned to his fort late that night with twenty-five of the Deerfield men who had rushed up to the rescue. They all knew the Rices well, many having been hospitably entertained there by the captain when out scouting,

and Phineas Arms was a Deerfield boy. Some of his brothers were among the rescue party. Only five weeks before his death Phineas had joined the Deerfield church. Great was the dismay and sorrow felt in Deerfield at the sad news of this sudden calamity.

Early the next morning the men from Deerfield and the Taylors went up to the Rices'. With them went Artemas, to the joy of his family, who had given up all hope of seeing him again, supposing him either slain or captured. There was nothing to be done now but to bury the dead, and comfort as they could the sorrowful family.

Captain Rice was buried on the hillside near his home. His was, fittingly, the first burial in Charlemont. Phineas Arms was laid beside him. The captain was sixty-one; Phineas, twenty-one. Here in this beautiful spot, overlooking the home so dear to him, the fair meadows through which the Deerfield murmurs ceaselessly, the forest-clad mountains beyond, the captain's worn body lies at peace after his brave and useful life. The name of this sturdy pioneer can never be forgotten, and is perpetuated by many worthy descendants.

Samuel Rice fortified his house on the meadows, soldiers were stationed there, and the old

home on the hill was abandoned until the war ended.<sup>1</sup> Asa Rice remained a captive in Canada six years, being a youth of fifteen when at last he returned.

Titus King was carried to Canada, from there to France, and thence to England, whence at last he returned home, living in Northampton. Such were the stirring possibilities of life in those days. A man might eat his breakfast and quietly go forth as usual to his morning work in field or mill, and come home, after an interval of years, by way of Canada, France, and England, with many stirring adventures by sea and land.<sup>2</sup>

In this same month of June an attack was made on Fort Bridgman. Jemima, the young widow of William Phipps (who was slain by Indians), had married Caleb Howe. Caleb was now killed, and his wife Jemima with her seven children and others of the settlers carried off to Canada. The experiences of Mrs. Howe, "the Fair Captive," as she was called, form one of the most interesting chapters of our early history. Some of her children were never redeemed. Her oldest daughter, Mary Phipps, was taken to France, where she married a Frenchman.

Indian hostilities and death and disaster con-

<sup>1</sup> Appendix E.

<sup>2</sup> Appendix F.

tinued all along the northern borders. July 22 came the news of Braddock's defeat at Fort Duquesne, most disheartening to the colonists. Governor Shirley's expedition against Niagara was also a failure. Extracts from letters written at this time give us pictures of the depression of the people.

Seth Field, writing from Northfield, says: "Since the disastrous tidings from Ohio, and the delay of the Crown Point forces, the mischief done above us, together with our circumstances, has so discouraged the hearts of our people that they are almost ready to give up all, and care only for their lives. A fine harvest is on the ground, and likely to be lost for want of a guard."

From Fort Hinsdale Colonel Hinsdale wrote that the Indians were all around them, killing cattle, and "was so bold here last week as to return our watchword in the night, 'Sharp — all is well.' A good harvest, but the crop must be lost unless a guard is sent."

Major Elijah Williams, writing from Deerfield, says: "The inhabitants of Greenfield are in great distress, and are daily obliged to find guards themselves, beside the soldiers that are allowed them, — who are but two out every day on guard; only two left to keep the garri-

sons. We at Deerfield, being reduced by so many of our people being gone into the service of the province that we have but about seventy men left in the town, and how we shall be able to get hay to keep our stock and seed our ground I know not." From Colerain and other points came similar tales of Indians hovering around, and inadequate guards to protect the harvest gatherers.

Sir William Johnson, commander of the expedition to Crown Point, after a long delay, finally left Albany with his troops in August, and encamped at the upper end of Lake George, fourteen miles northwest of Fort Edward. An army of about two thousand French and Indians, under Baron Dieskau, landed near Whitehall, and began marching towards Fort Edward.

On hearing this, Johnson despatched Col. Ephraim Williams with the Hampshire regiment and two hundred friendly Indians led by their chief, Hendrick, to intercept the enemy. Dieskau contrived to ensnare these forces, so inferior in numbers to his own, in a skilfully prepared ambush. A desperate battle followed, beginning at six in the morning and lasting all day, in which Colonel Williams and Hendrick were slain. Baron Dieskau was wounded and captured by the English, his wounds being

dressed by Dr. Thomas Williams. This battle was long known as "the Bloody Morning Scout."

While delaying at Albany, Col. Ephraim Williams, feeling, it is said, a strong presentiment of impending death, drew up a will. He was anxious to do something for the children of his old comrades who were taking up lands and settling around Fort Massachusetts. He left the bulk of his property for a free school in the township near and west of Fort Massachusetts, requesting that the town be called "Williamstown." Thus was Williams College founded and endowed, an outcome of the old military life at Fort Massachusetts and the border forts during the French and Indian wars that could little have been foreseen.<sup>1</sup>

The war continued until the decisive battle on the Plains of Abraham between the forces led by Montcalm and Wolfe ended in the fall of Quebec, Sept. 18, 1759. In July, Fort Ticonderoga had fallen into the hands of General Amherst, and in September Amherst sent out Major Rogers to destroy the Indian village at St. Francis, whence so many bloody raids had been made on the borders. The expedition was successful, and the exploits of "Rogers"

<sup>1</sup> Appendix G.

Rangers" effectually put an end to trouble from St. Francis.

On Sept. 8, 1760, Montreal was surrendered by Vaudreuil to Amherst. The war was ended, and with it the French dominion on this continent.

Canada was now under English rule. The people of New England rested secure in the knowledge that the bloody ravages desolating their borders for nearly a century had forever ceased. Fostered by peace, the settlements already founded began to grow rapidly.

Captain Rice's sons dwelt on the ample lands secured to them by their father's labor, foresight, and indomitable pluck, and were all honored and useful citizens. Sylvanus married Esther Nims, daughter of John Nims of Deerfield, in 1760. He did valiant service in the Revolution; was captain of a company of "minutemen," and, when he led his company to the aid of New London, patriotically mortgaged his farm to raise the necessary means for equipments. Tamar married John Wells, a Deerfield boy of the old Wells family, descended from Thomas Wells of Hadley. They settled in Deerfield Northwest, later called Shelburne.

Mrs. Rice lived many years after her husband's death, dying in 1788, making her home

with her son Aaron, one of the most intelligent, prominent, and useful citizens of Charlemont. Artemas lived on the eastern section of his father's land. He married, first, Mary Stevens; and second, Catherine Taylor of Deerfield, niece of Othniel, and daughter of the John Taylor who accompanied Hawks on his trip to Canada with St. Blein.

The soldiers who, during the French and Indian wars, had so often in scouting traversed the northern tract now included in the state of Vermont, had not failed to notice the fertile meadows and wooded hills, the flowing streams, all unclaimed, and by the year 1765 Governor Wentworth had made grants for 138 townships in that section. Promising settlements were growing at Bellows Falls, Windsor, Manchester, Bennington, Burlington, St. Albans, Vergennes, and Rutland, among others.

Although the colonists might congratulate themselves that the desolating French and Indian wars were at last happily ended, already heavy clouds, presaging another storm, began to darken the political horizon. Much dissatisfaction had arisen with the mother country. A new generation was now to the fore in America, a generation born on the soil, hardened and disciplined in the Indian wars, filled with

the spirit of youthful independence, with ties to England less strong than those of their fathers. Wise men, on both sides, foreboded a coming conflict between the colonies and England.

"For all what you Americans say of your loyalty," observed Pratt, the attorney-general (better known in America as Lord Camden), to Franklin, "and notwithstanding your boasted affection, you will one day set up for independence."

"No such idea," replied Franklin sincerely, "is entertained by Americans, or ever will be, unless you grossly abuse them."

"Very true," rejoined Pratt; "that I see will happen and will produce the event."<sup>1</sup>

He predicted truly. An uneasy peace of only twenty years' duration was to be followed by another war, the war of the Revolution.

<sup>1</sup> Bancroft's History of the United States, Vol. IV., p. 380.

## APPENDIX A.

The old Allen house still stands at the Bars, doubly interesting, not only as a relic of the past, but for certain other associations alluded to by Mr. George Sheldon in his "History of Deerfield," page 528, where he says:

"The old brown mansion, where the squaw kept her best blanket, moccasins and wampum, still standing on the Allen homestead, where it has braved the storms of more than seven score winters, had become in these later years the studio of George Fuller. Opposite stands the house where he was born, and where his life struggle went on, his great power unseen and unfelt. Each day he saw the slant rays of the sun light up the broad front of the old house across the way, and at nightfall, when he played his boyish games on the almost unbroken green stretching between, he saw its dark bulk, with its huge chimney, loom up against the western sky. It was in this house that his deepest aspirations took on form and color. It was here, in the quiet atmosphere and surroundings of the Bars, that his masterpieces were conceived and brought forth, and not in the stirring, busy metropolis of New England.

"The Pocumtuck chieftain may never again return to this classic ground, and he himself is but a faded memory; but his favorite haunt will be forever immortalized by the name and fame of George Fuller."

## APPENDIX B.

Mr. David Avery, a Charlemont centenarian who recently passed away, was wont to give reminiscences of the early days there. His father took up a tract of land a mile square in the wilderness at Charlemont, building a log house upon it, a few years prior to 1780. To illustrate the abundance of game in Charlemont at that time, Mr Avery stated that his father, a noted hunter, in one year shot nineteen bears, thirty wolves, sixty deer, and two moose.

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## APPENDIX C.

The various Williamses who were prominent figures at this time may need some explanation. Col. Israel Williams of Hatfield was the son of Rev. William Williams, for many years the minister at Hatfield. Rev. William Williams was own cousin to Rev. John Williams, the "Redeemed Captive." He married the daughter of Rev. Solomon Stoddard of Northampton.

Capt. Elijah Williams was the youngest son of Rev. John Williams of Deerfield by his second wife, a prominent man in Deerfield, filling many important positions.

Capt. William Williams was a grandson of Rev. William Williams.

Capt. Ephraim Williams and his brother, Dr. Thomas Williams, were nephews of Rev. William Williams, and own cousins to Col. Israel Williams and Col. John Stoddard. All the Williamses were connected by various degrees of cousinship, and descended from Robert Williams of Roxbury.

## APPENDIX D.

## ·LUCE 'BIJAH'S POEM.

August, 't was the twenty-fifth,  
Seventeen hundred and forty-six,  
The Indians did in ambush lay,  
Some very valiant men to slay,  
The names of whom I'll not leave out;  
Samuel Allen like a hero fout,  
And though he was so brave and bold,  
His face no more shall we behold.

Eleazer Hawks was killed outright,  
Before he had time to fight, —  
Before he did the Indians see,  
Was shot and killed immediately.

Oliver Amsden he was slain,  
Which caused his friends much grief and pain.  
Simeon Amsden they found dead  
Not many rods distant from his head.

Adonijah Gillett, we do hear,  
Did lose his life which was so dear.  
John Saddler fled across the water,  
And thus escaped the dreadful slaughter.  
Eunice Allen saw the Indians coming,  
And hopes to save herself by running;  
And had not her petticoats stopped her,  
The awful creatures had not catch'd her,  
Nor tommy hawk'd her on the head,  
And left her on the ground for dead.  
Young Samuel Allen, oh, lackaday!  
Was taken and carried to Canada.

## APPENDIX E.

The majestic old buttonball tree, that stood there when all around was primitive wilderness, still stands on the hillside in Charlemont. It is pleasant to know that Charles Dudley Warner passed his boyhood in the house standing on the site of Captain Rice's under the buttonball, and that the delightful book, "Being a Boy," describes his boyhood amid these scenes. In "Being a Boy," he says (page 225): "Under the broad but scanty shade of the great buttonball tree (as it was called) stood an old watering trough with its half-decayed penstock and well-worn spout pouring forever cold, sparkling water into the overflowing trough. It is fed by a spring near by, and the water is sweeter and colder than any in the known world, unless it be the well Zem-Zem, as generations of people and horses which have drunk of it would testify, if they could come back. And if they could file along this road again, what a procession there would be riding down the valley!"

Another allusion is this: "The chief point of interest, however, is an enormous sycamore tree by the roadside and in front of John's house. The house is more than a century old, and its timbers were hewed and squared by Capt. Moses Rice, who lies in his grave on the hillside above it." This, of course, alludes to the second house built by Captain Rice.

Speaking of "playing Indian," Mr. Warner says: "Traditions of Indian cruelty were still fresh in Western Massachusetts. Behind John's house in the orchard were some old slate tombstones, sunken and leaning, which recorded the names of Capt. Moses Rice and Phineas Arms, who

had been killed by Indians in the last century while at work in the meadow by the river and who slept there in the hope of a glorious resurrection. . . . It was a quiet place where they lay, but they might have heard — if hear they could — the loud, continuous roar of the Deerfield, and the stirring of the long grass on that sunny slope. There was a tradition that an Indian, probably the last of his race, had been seen moving along the crest of the mountain, and gazing down into the lovely valley which had been the favorite home of his tribe, upon the fields where he grew his corn, and the sparkling stream whence he drew his fish. John used to fancy at times, as he sat there, that he could see that red spectre gliding among the trees on the hill," etc.

"Being a Boy" is strongly commended to young readers, who will find in it many pictures of boy life on the farm where the Rice boys played.

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## APPENDIX F.

In 1871 a monument to Captain Rice was erected at his grave on the hillside by his great-great-grandson, Orlando B. Potter of New York. It was dedicated Aug. 2, 1871, by the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association. The Association's report says: "One of the largest gatherings ever assembled in Pocumtuck Valley was attracted to the beautiful town to participate in the day's celebration."

The inscription on the south side of the monument reads:

## CAPT. MOSES RICE

THE FIRST SETTLER OF CHARLEMONT,  
BORN AT SUDBURY, OCT. 27, 1694  
MARRIED SARAH KING OF S., NOV. 16, 1719  
REMOVED TO CHARLEMONT 1742  
KILLED BY THE INDIANS, JUNE 11, 1755.

On the west side:

## PHINEAS ARMS

BORN AT DEERFIELD, OCT. 4, 1731  
KILLED BY THE INDIANS WITH  
CAPT. RICE  
AND BURIED AT HIS SIDE.

The remaining sides of the monument bear the names of Captain Rice's children, all of whom are buried on the hillside beside their father.

The report further says:

"The monument was erected under the direction of Hon. Joseph White of Williamstown, the Secretary of the State Board of Education, a native of Charlemont, and a descendant of Moses Rice. In digging for the foundation, the remains of the slain men were found in a remarkable state of preservation. The skull of Rice showed the marks of the Indian tomahawk, and the fatal bullet fell from that of Arms, when it was being examined."

This bullet, which killed Phineas Arms, is now in the Clark Museum at Williams College. In the course of his

address on this occasion, Mr. White said that "a portion of the house now standing was built by Captain Rice and son in 1750," and he showed "how far the farm of 2,000 acres extended, and the 200 acres on the opposite shore" of the Deerfield.

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#### APPENDIX G.

The site of Fort Massachusetts was wholly unmarked until 1859, when Prof. A. L. Perry of Williams College, author of "Origins in Williamstown," whose interest in all relating to Fort Massachusetts was great, planted a fine elm tree on the spot indicated to him by one in whose knowledge he had confidence as the centre of the fort's old parade ground. This tree is now large and stately. Yet it seems as if some more permanent memorial should be placed on the spot, with a suitable inscription. Williams College might fittingly attend to this matter.



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